THE ART WORK OF LOUIS C. TIFFANY

No 35 Jan. 1 - 1915

To Mr Geo. F. Baker

Dear Mr Baker

I take pleasure in sending you my book, as I know how much you are interested in all art workers.

Louis C. Tiffany

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THE ART WORK
OF
LOUIS C. TIFFANY

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GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
MCMXIV

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TO
MY CHILDREN

FOREWORD

FOREWORD

This volume is not written for the public, but for the children of Louis Comfort Tiffany and at their request. Much concerning their own father which may be known to his fellow artists or to workers in various fields of art, or to persons in different employments and separate ranks of life, is unknown to them. No reason for surprise in this: it is the commonest thing in the world to find that the last persons to be informed of what a professional man has achieved in his life work are his children. For the former, more than any other man, uses his home as a rest and refuge from the ideas that beset him at his daily task. With his nearest and dearest he rarely if ever "talks shop." What more natural, then, for them to discover with something of a shock that if anything should happen to their father they would be left without a record of the various lines of endeavor he pursued?

It is this condition confronting them which caused their father to listen to their reproaches and overcome his natural dislike for anything that savors of self-seeking and agree to the printing of a book which is to some extent a biography but primarily a record.

Señor Sorolla has painted a likeness of Louis C. Tiffany with the environment of the latter's home in summer about him. Brush in hand, he sits on the terrace before his easel, surrounded by masses of his favorite flowers, a friendly old dog by his side, and the blue reach of one of Long Island's land-locked harbors in the background. Painting in the sunlight, his features are fixed in the effort to apprehend truly what he sees, and, having understood, to make the selection,

and, having made the selection, to get that out of his mind on to the canvas.

In the same fashion, if one wishes to fix in print the character and output of an artist, one must place him in relation to his environment. But while the likeness in oils is that of a man at a given, chosen moment, the likeness in a memoir has to take four decades into account and show the workman employed with many other activities than that of painting flowers. The environment is not only varied, it is most complicated. For one must consider, not only the man's activities in art, but the conditions under which art appears in his country and lifetime.

* * *

Given a young man with a character of his own and an original cast of mind, and it is inevitable that he should begin by criticizing the work of his elders, noting the weak spots, exaggerating them perhaps, and placing himself in opposition. Although Louis C. Tiffany is the son of a man who established his name the world over as a goldsmith and jeweler, his earlier years were devoted to painting, not to craftsmanship. One perceives in him, during his painter years, a reaction against the commercial element in the business Mr. Charles L. Tiffany built up. Is that surprising?

For one thing, time is sure to bring with it the realization that too exclusive a belief in what is termed the fine arts, too narrow an estimate of the world-wide mystery of art in general, produces in artists a peculiar desiccation of the imagination. We call it sometimes "falling into a rut," and have to lament its presence in men of very high attainments after we obtain a comprehensive view of their life work. In the case of the son, it was his father's great success as a business man which enabled him to see the world and revise that very natural and normal error which causes painters and sculptors to speak in derogatory terms of all forms of art that are not termed "fine," or, if you prefer, "pure." Particularly was the art of the craftsmen of

the Orient illuminating, not forgetting such Western artists as Whistler, La Farge, and Mempes, who felt the same movement about the same time. Travel in Algiers, Morocco, Palestine, not to speak of Persia, India, China, Japan, undertaken by those who can see below the surface, must give a wrench to many prejudices imbibed from art schools and academies in which the majority of men are blind followers of those whose eyes never see.

No one can study the primitives and the artists of the Renaissance in Europe without perceiving that there must be something wrong in the conventions under which most of our painters and sculptors and architects have been vegetating, something wrong in their ideas and ideals, which may have been fitting for other epochs, to other religious, political, and educational formulas, but assuredly do not suit the conditions as they exist in Europe and America to-day.

Even among painters there are degrees established; even in the painter's gild there is caste. Thus the artist in oils looks down on him who prefers water colors, and has little regard for pastelists! These distinctions and involuntary snobberies in the branch of art which attracts the majority of artists would be purely amusing if they did not offer a pathetic side. For they occasion very often this very serious result: Artists who can never rise above mediocrity in oil-painting but have a charming talent in water colors or pastel, devote their lives obstinately to the vehicle they can not drive well, because they have been allowed to think that to work with any other thing than oils will cause them to "derogate from their nobility." This is what they learn in their school days; this is a feeling they discover later among painters. Many who would succeed in one beautiful craft or another are obstinate in their devotion to some one of the "fine" arts.

The Ghirlandaios of Florence received their name of "garland maker" owing to the proficiency of the first of the family in goldsmith work. Nor is their example at all uncommon. Many painters and sculptors began as craftsmen. The latter are nearer the people, for

they fabricate useful objects belonging to daily life, while the artist who produces objects of the fine arts, so called, is more remote. His work usually demands on the part of the observer a longer education for its appreciation. There lies a gap between the people and objects of pure art which forces the artist-painter into a narrow sphere and compels him to seek the restricted public of amateurs and connoisseurs.

It is this apparent exclusiveness and aristocracy in the fine arts which has given room for much error and helped impede the course of art in modern times. The inference has been drawn that objects of art without any practical end in themselves, objects without direct usefulness, are necessarily of higher value than such commonplace things as tools, utensils, and weapons, table ornaments and furniture, objects used as personal decorations. These last are regarded as non-esthetic and therefore inferior to things of pure or fine art like a symbolical picture, a heroic statue, a church window. As a crowning touch to this tendency to establish a system of caste in the realm of esthetics we get the cry "art for art's sake" along with some of the most childish and insincere grotesques the world has ever seen.

* * *

As far back as we can look through the vistas of the past to the beginnings of what fairly may be termed art, all forms were originally useful. The ancestors of the earliest Europeans, whoever they were, drew and carved the figures of animals on tusk and on wall of cave, in order to hypnotize thereby the beasts which were their food and supplied them with clothing against the cold. Early Belgians and Britons may have taken—probably did take—some esthetic pleasure in the dark blue decorations of woad laid on their skins. But there was a meaning, a direct use, in these paintings and stainings connected either with religious beliefs like the marks made on their faces by high-caste Hindoos or with the identification of persons. These traditional decorations still survive in the tattoo marks of sailors. Perhaps they were

a primitive blazonry of rank and precedence. This is the more probable because Polynesians and other folk on a primitive plane have good and useful reasons for the dots, lines, or figures stained or painted upon face and body or tattooed in the skin. Our Indians paint themselves, not so much for beauty—although that enters into it—as for witchcraft, as we may term their stage of religion. Designs which we are surprised to recognize as singularly original and excellent in line, proportions, color, carved on columns, shields, and paddles by New Zealand natives, prove of the greatest use to their owners.

Is it not of use to wield a paddle that will frighten off sharks and help the fishing? Could one ask for a better shield than one so carved and painted that it may paralyze the beholder, like the Medusa head on the aegis of Pallas Athene? Since among moderns of our stripe paintings and sculptures also are frequently valued for their decorative effects alone, not for any esthetic contents in the way of meaning or symbolism which they might convey to the initiated, one finds it very difficult to draw the line and establish exactly where non-esthetic, utilitarian art ends, and fine, pure, esthetic-only art begins.

* * *

How an artist arrives at the production of a work of art will always have about it an air of mystery. Scarcely are we justified therefore in blaming our forebears because a similarity in sound caused them to confuse a *maisterie* or handicraft with that secret ritual of certain Greeks called *mysterion* which was practised notably at Eleusis by the initiated. The words are so alike, to begin with, though derived from different languages! To the simple layman the art of a trade or handicraft is so obscure, so hidden, so mysterious! And the error grew during the Middle Ages when "mystery" plays were given by maisters or craftsmen, and under the influence of the church their tenor was of things supernatural and therefore mysterious. Mystery, maisterie—the plot thickened. . . .

Nor were the earlier artists behindhand in magnifying their office by appeals to the credulity of laymen. By shrouding the technical processes of the several arts in mystery they ran a race with the priesthood. A somewhat closer analogy than with priests lies with the alchemists, whose methods and materials were very similar to those of painters, enamelers, glass-makers. Between chemistry and painting the connection has been intimate at all times and never more so than at present, witness the obligations to science of the plein-airists:—painters of sunshine.

From the Byzantine seventh century down to seventeenth century France we find hand books used by artist-artisans—the *claviculae*, the *schedulae*, the *libri diversarum artium* full of the spirit of Free Masonry, the spirit of the gild, the "mystery" of a sect or priesthood; and there are frequent signs of jealousy of the secular artist shown by the teacher of religion.

* * *

Indeed with the best intentions and frankest mind in the world, an artist cannot teach laymen much concerning the way in which the object of art has birth, for the artist is rarely an examiner of his own mental processes. His cast of mind is almost always the opposite to an analytical one. We see that it takes a long time for a painter or sculptor, a musician or actor to learn the rudiments of art activity. But that does not tell us how, when, or why the creative act occurs. It merely means that each art demands more or less faithfulness in practice, more or less study and preparation, industry and concentration, labors which all workers have to perform whether they remain pupils and copyists, or rise to the level of originators, creators, artists of mark.

Undoubtedly there is a certain degree of pleasure in such an expression, a certain element of desire that others shall be pleased, or at any rate moved, by some thrill which is akin to pleasure. Yet it may well be questioned if the happiness which the artist desires to rouse in others bulks largely in the matter. Altruism is not very potent. Even

the selfish pleasure the artist feels in his own creative act may be, and in fact usually is, overrated. It seems likelier that there is some compelling force infinitely bigger, infinitely subtler, which urges man onward whenever the environment is favorable. And that force naturally shows itself in certain individuals who by nature are fitted for such activities. The force may seek its vent in youth, in middle or in old age. It may confine itself to one line of endeavor and issue by one narrow outlet, or it may appear in several, as we find to be the case in such many-sided men as Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo; in Albrecht Dürer, El Greco, and Benvenuto Cellini.

Still another element is the desire for beauty. But here we meet the difficulty of deciding what beauty is, owing to the difference of opinion concerning its presence or absence in a given object, or even in that most obvious standard, the human form. There is the fact that from time to time men appear—sometimes singly, sometimes in groups—who have what seems a vocation, to adopt a word used by the religious, their call being to express emotion or thought in movement or in sounds or in concrete forms. Their coming has the look of such activities of the brain as characterize inventors, for which we have no satisfactory explanation at present, although mankind must have reached its various stages by the exercise of this faculty. Yes, when one reflects upon it, the process of getting subjective thoughts, impressions, feelings out of one's mind into objective reality, where they can be seen, heard, appreciated by others, is certainly a marvellous thing.

Artists must always have supplied some deep-lying need. In some epochs they seem to have appeared in families or clans, as if they served not so much individual as collective expression and represented the *instinct* for art in a community or tribe. In North America there were tribes who made a specialty of carved and ornamented stone pipes. Mexico, Japan, China had their art centres, some of which linger to the present day, where a specific kind of pottery, basket

work, weave was fabricated by families. But, concerning the blossoming of very marvellous fine art, history does not give us much light as to the wherefore at one period rather than the why at another. Epochs of great national success in war, or expansion in colonies, or race movements, or great calamity; epochs of great accumulated wealth, or the entrance from outside of novel ideas—these have been supposed to be accompanied or followed by outbursts of art-production. But history contains too many such epochs during and after which no artistic revival ensued. Whatever they may spin, these agreeable, nay, fascinating theorists! we are really quite at sea regarding the kind of people, the sort of country, the favorable psychic conditions, when and where art is likely to bloom.

The arts appear to rise like religions in the most unexpected spots and to spring from obscure roots. Like religions, they grow, unobserved at first, among humble folk—very conscious yet strangely unselfconscious folk—waxing strong in the face of ridicule and sometimes at the expense of "common sense."

A conspicuous example of a religion continuing in defiance of common sense is the pantheon of the Greeks, a people who scarcely can be called a foolish one. Could anything imagined be more preposterous than the actions of the deities to whom the Athenians expected that Pericles, Socrates, Xenophon, Plato should bow with respect? Communities modeling themselves on the manners and morals of those gods could scarcely exist.

The arts have been often nearly as preposterous and impossible to dovetail into the actual life of the people among which they flourished, from the heavy nose rings, labrets, leg and arm rings of blacks and Indians to the modern furniture of Germany. Traditions have had as powerful effects in the arts as in religion. Tradition forced the world to accept with rapture what passed away from all reasonable connection with the actualities of the present long ago. To take an example a century back: the so-called "colonial" architecture in America. Could

anything have been less suited to the climate of our eastern seaboard and to the habits of the early nineteenth century? Yet during its prevalence it had a great vogue; of late years it is enjoying a revival in all parts of Canada and the United States. Or, in painting, the brown tones conventionally accepted for a century or more in Italy, France, Germany, and England as the adequate representation of figure scenes and landscape, a fashion that went so far that painters did not dare use green pigments to reproduce foliage—for to paint leaves green was considered vulgar!

In sculpture the last three centuries actually forbade the use of colors! These aberrations or conventions are usually the result of some tyranny exerted over the field of esthetics by a family or gild of artists forming what we call a school. Schools are still possible to-day where religion remains authoritative and government monarchic. But in the greater part of the world these ideals for the control of man no longer obtain, or else they linger in a feeble stage, owing their prolonged existence to a dislike to overturn what was good enough for ancestors.

With the triumph of individuality in politics and religion, ideas as to art partake of the general discontent and unrest. It is only by adapting the word "school of art" to a very different thing that we can use it at all. There are still men of force in the arts who are imitated by pupils and others. Such are Claude Monet, landscape and flower painter, Whistler and Sargent, Rodin the sculptor. How imitation of these masters sometimes works out is seen among followers of the last named. A young sculptor, impressed by the rude blocks of marble from which certain heads, figures, etc., by Rodin emerge, and by his fanciful use of the "hand of god" in sculpture, could think of nothing better to do than in all seriousness to model, emerging from a mass of roughened marble, a solitary hand—holding a cigarette!

It is only with much qualification that one can say of the present that a "school of art" exists.

France and the United States, having destroyed the power of caste

and divorced religion from the State, are attempting to give every person the same opportunity. The final result should be to raise the status of the writer and artist as typical men of brains. At the same time the tendency must be toward a change in patrons, or those who support such persons. In place of the church, the king, the noble, the millionaire, we have the broad masses, educated as well as the foregoing on the whole, if not better than they, and perhaps less open to prejudices and conventions, more unsophisticated, less self-conscious, readier to give ear to any new message that may come from far or near.

* * *

Art for the people, if we may judge by the past, is sure to be freer from tradition than that of the bygone schools and is likely to have a larger element of the useful. In other words, the arts and crafts will gain, relatively speaking, on the fine arts. Already are legislative halls, railway stations, and opera houses liable to be not only costlier but more beautiful than the palaces of the rich, even than the homes of religion. One sees a definite stream setting away from easel pictures and household marbles toward as beautiful walls, hangings, furniture, table-silver as the age can produce. While there is still a great and increasing demand for mural painting, owing to the erection of municipal and governmental buildings whose architecture demands such adornments, the field for painters has broadened out so tremendously during the past half century that the old limitations imposed by artists on their own gild have gone by the board. As to those who cling to the view that art lies only in the hands of painters and sculptors, their patrons are tending to become relatively fewer as time goes on. No profession is more overcrowded. Clients do not keep increasing; it is rather the other way.

* * *

Among the artists who have led the way in this change there is none who has affected the taste of the public more profoundly than

Louis Comfort Tiffany. And the reason is not far to seek. With a tenacity rarely seen among those who when young have been subjected to the high-sounding claims of academical painters he has refused to limit his curiosity as an artist to one or two paths in art. He has followed first one road, then another, without heeding the formulas of his fellows, who seem always singularly enraged if one of the fraternity deviates from the unwritten rules of the gild. Now he has turned toward stained glass, and again to mosaic, or to pottery, or to enamels, or else to tapestries and rugs, or at another time to jewelry. He has made special studies of decoration and lighting, and, though for many years interested in floriculture, he has given much attention to landscape architecture and house building. In some branches he has achieved a world-wide reputation; in others he is scarcely known to the general public, in still others he has been so content to pursue the study for his own enjoyment that hardly a person in his immediate circle knows what he has achieved.

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THE ART WORK
OF
LOUIS C. TIFFANY

CHAPTER I

TIFFANY THE PAINTER

CHAPTER I

TIFFANY THE PAINTER

Louis Comfort Tiffany was born with a golden spoon in his mouth, but the spoon was immediately tucked away and he was seldom permitted to remember its existence. His father, the eminent goldsmith and jeweler Charles Lewis Tiffany, and his mother, who was Harriet Olivia Young before her marriage, did not believe in spoiling children by allowing them to live on a scale such as their fortune warranted. Education should be thorough, but luxuries few, and spending money curtailed. Born February 18th, 1848, their son was still at school when the Civil War was fought, but like many other school boys of that period we can imagine how he deplored the fate of having been born too late to take any part in the contest. Some of his fellow artists in later life such as George B. Butler, Elihu Vedder, and Winslow Homer had been to the war. As he grew up he felt the longing for expression which indicates the coming artist and usually makes him cold toward a college career, so that at the age when a youth in his circumstances is pretty sure to be at the university he was haunting the studios of George Inness, N. A., and Samuel Colman, N. A., the latter one of the founders and first presidents of that Society of Painters in Water Colors which became the American Water Color Society and also one of the original members of the Society of American Artists, merged later into the National Academy of Design.

George Inness was a man peculiarly fitted, through certain sides of his character, to rouse the interest of a pupil. His incisive, out-spoken

views on art were supplemented by a stimulating if somewhat chaotic philosophy in which the sublime ideas of Swedenborg took a prominent place. I remember hours passed in his studio in the old University building on Washington Square when he would stand before his easel making and unmaking a picture with rapid strokes of his brush, all the while pouring forth a stream of talk in which, unlike that of other artists, a strong religious feeling appeared and was lost, only to reappear again like the white streaks which tinge a river below the cataract. Inness in 1878 attempted to fix some of these fleeting ideas in *Harper's Monthly* when he wrote:

"The true use of art is, first, to cultivate the artist's own spiritual nature and, secondly, to enter as a factor in general civilization. And the increase of these efforts depends on the purity of the artist's motives in the pursuit of art. Every artist who, without reference to external circumstances, aims truly to represent the ideas and emotions which come to him when in the presence of nature is in process of his own spiritual development and is a benefactor of his race. No man can attempt the reproduction of any idea within him from a pure motive or love of the idea itself without being in the course of his own regeneration. The difficulties necessary to be overcome in communicating the substance of his idea (which in this case, is feeling or emotion) to the end that the idea may be more and more perfectly conveyed to others, involve the exercise of his intellectual faculties; and soon the discovery is made that the moral element underlies all, that unless the moral also is brought into play the intellectual faculties are not in condition for conveying the artistic impulse or inspiration. The mind may, indeed, be convinced of the means of operation, but only when the moral powers have been cultivated do the conditions exist, necessary to the transmission of the artistic inspiration which is from truth and goodness itself. Of course no man's motive can be absolutely pure and single. His environment affects him. But the true artistic impulse is divine."

Louis C. Tiffany

And again: "Rivers, streams, the rippling brook, the hillside, the sky, clouds—all things we see—will convey the sentiment of the highest art, if we are in the love of God and the desire of truth."

Inness did not give instruction in painting; his way was to criticise or appreciate the work of a young artist from time to time. Perhaps the disquisitions into which he launched were sometimes confusing, for they were likely to carry the mind of the learner far afield. But he had a good deal of William Morris Hunt's inspiriting quality. He set high ideals before the student. He was a colorist and as such could not fail to appeal to Tiffany.

Samuel Colman was a man of less intense, more methodical character, who dealt with landscape in a large way. There was more of the patient, painstaking teacher in him, and if not so strong a colorist as Inness, if he did not have the latter's infinite variety, nor his power to express emotion through landscape, if he lacked the picturesque light and shade of Inness which attracted and repelled yet always kept the attention, still, there were sterling qualities in him that showed themselves in a certain nobility of work within narrower lines. The odd fact that Samuel Colman came of a Swedenborgian family and Inness was a Swedenborgian may be set down as a mere coincidence. Colman's father was a seller of books and engravings in New York where his son was born in 1832. He exhibited for the first time in 1850 and traveled in Europe during 1860-1862, going abroad again for five years in 1870. Tuckerman in 1867 wrote of him: "The delicacy of this artist contrasts strongly and perhaps unprosperously with the more material attractions of our popular landscape painters; but to the eye of refined taste, to the quiet lover of nature, there is a peculiar charm in Colman's style which sooner or later will be widely appreciated." The justice of this appreciation was verified some years ago when Mr. Colman, who had retired from active life in New York for a long while, held a sale of his pictures. It was then recognized that a very charming talent had lain perdu. He founded with James D. Smillie in 1867 the water color

club that became in time the present American Water Color Society and was its first President.

The pupil must have shared this master's love of water color. Indeed Isham, an excellent judge of his fellow artists, has written concerning him. "There was much of Colman's love of warm, pure color in his paintings in transparent wash or in *gouache* on rough straw-board, of Italian or Mexican scenes, that used to light up the early exhibitions of the Water Color Society, the firmness of outline and energy of drawing being probably the result of French training."

These last words refer to a third artist whom Tiffany admired and visited, Léon Belly of Paris, who, like Samuel Colman, was a landscapist who traveled in northern Africa, Egypt, and Palestine and made his mark. Jules Breton in *Nos Peintres du Siècle* says he painted Egyptian scenes "of an exact sort in which, however, one wished for more emotion. His pictures of Palestine impressed me more favorably, particularly his impressive canvas representing the Dead Sea." And in the Salon of 1867 he notes his "superb views from Africa." Like Colman, the arts of the Orient appealed to him very strongly and this agreed with Tiffany's nature. Though he did not work with L. Belly he did study hard under Bailly, a thorough teacher of drawing who lived at Passy and took particular pains with the young American. It may be remarked, however, that neither Belly's, Inness's, nor Colman's work was reflected in that of Tiffany. He went his own way after the modern fashion in art which seeks to encourage individuality, unlike the earlier traditions of schools and gilds which made for uniformity.

In 1870 Tiffany was elected to the Century Club. In 1871 he was accepted as Associate of the National Academy of Design and in the following year he married Miss Mary Woodbridge Goddard. He was a member of the American Water Color Society and for many years a constant contributor. It was about this time that Tiffany enraged the "legitimate" water colorists or sticklers for "wash" by using body color freely. Acrimonious were the remarks in the press and the

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studios over this audacity. Body color was a crime! This narrowness exists to-day, although it is shown in other ways. Not only must you pray like your neighbor, but you must use the same pigments in the same way. If not—out you go! In 1877, when the Society of American Artists was established by artists who felt that the leaders of the National Academy were too narrow in their views, he was one of the founders along with Inness, Colman, Wyatt Eaton, La Farge, Martin, and Saint Gaudens. Three years later his election as National Academician did not make him any the less a friend of the new Society. The establishment of the Architectural League found him equally receptive.

The period 1870 to 1890 was characterized by an unusual movement in art matters by no means confined to New York, a movement that showed itself by the foundation of societies and organizations through which it was hoped to enlist the interest of the public. The National Sculpture Society, which still flourishes, the New York Etching Club, a band of gallant but perhaps premature pastellists, and the New York Society of Fine Arts, these last no longer of this world, were started at that time. Tiffany was working out some of his ideas in other mediums than oils and water colors even then, but he was guided by movements indicated by such organizations for the encouragement of the narrower "fine arts."

In the early seventies we find Tiffany in Algiers enchanted with the broad masses of Moslem architecture, the long level lines of mosques and their surrounding buildings cut by the trunks and shadows of palms. Here is a view in 1874 called "The Pool" which is typical of the strong sunlight, the color, the contrasts that Decamps loved to reproduce. At the same time we find him catching the character of individual Orientals as in "Cobblers at Boufarik" (1888) and "Street Scene in Algiers," genre pictures from the Orient in which one feels the colorist as well as the painter of figures, a feeling for masses of light and shade as well as a sense of proportion in the grouping of human figures with relation to the background of architecture or land-

scape. On the other hand he did not, for all his experience of Europe and Algiers, disdain the home field or domestic genre. "In the Fields at Irvington" (1879) is a perfectly natural, unselfconscious scene from domestic life where interest centres on the small child with face turned to the spectator, the other three faces being averted or concealed. This charming unpretentious canvas has been reproduced here in colors, but the yellow tone is a little too prominent in the print. "Woodland" is another illustration which rather inadequately represents Tiffany in landscape. "The Studio," reproduced here in colors, has a musical quality in its color and composition. Note the upward sweep of the curves beginning with the arm of the half clad model seated on the floor rising by the broad fronds of a potted palm to the highlights on suspended lanterns. "Peacock" is a stronger and clearer presentation of the same sweeping curves, where the nude model, seated, offers through the lines of legs, torso, neck and lifted left arm the harmonious upward waves which culminate in the neck and head of Juno's bird. In this we have more distinctly enunciated a bit of symbolism. The seated figure may be called Psyche. With the peacock as the symbol of worldliness and sensuous beauty, being a bird of pride supposed to lack intellect and soul, we may contrast the butterfly which Psyche holds out to the peacock as the traditional symbol of immortality. Psyche's face accentuates the contrast between the superior and inferior. Above the bird's head the fruit-laden branches continue the sweeping lines and carry the eye back again to the seated figure. "Peonies" is an example of Tiffany's power of painting flowers with an admirable combination of arrangement and orderly disorder, at the same time that full justice is done to the beautiful rich colors of blossoms and vase. It would be easy to add to these examples, but the singular variety of his work compels one to call a halt.

Tiffany's leaning toward the Orient was recognized by his election to the Imperial Society of Fine Arts in Tokio; he became also a member of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris, while his exhibits at

the Exposition Internationale at Paris in 1900 won a gold medal and the title of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. In 1903 Yale University gave him the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

During the earlier period of his life we find Tiffany a student with masters of landscape but extending his scope into landscape with figures, thence to pictures in which the figure is everything, finally to larger decorative work where figures are employed with flowers and still-life to express emotions of a poetic or musical kind in paint. The colorist in him becomes an ever more important element and prepares the way for those creations in stained glass through which he has become known far beyond the borders of his own land. And though the multiplicity of demands on his time occasioned by his labors as a craftsman tended gradually to limit his work in painting and water colors, he has never renounced easel work but continues to give such time as he can spare to his brush and palette.

CHAPTER II

TIFFANY THE MAKER OF STAINED GLASS

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During his travels in England, France, Germany, and Italy it could not fail to strike a painter possessed of a feeling for color that modern stained glass as produced in Europe lacks the fundamental quality which separates the colored glass window from mosaic, or painting on the wall, that quality, without which the stained glass window may be said scarcely to have a reason for existence. It may be argued in extenuation of the deplorable coldness of this glass that the cloudy skies of northern Europe, the dark atmosphere of great cities, lead people away from such "dim religious light" as the cathedrals favored in the age of the splendor of Gothic architecture.

Practical reasons may well have caused the gradual introduction of lighter tones, especially in palaces, gild halls, town halls, libraries, and other places where it was necessary to have light enough for reading. But this was only one reason. A deeper-going cause was the rarity among artists of the appearance of the color-sense, something that exists or does not exist in a man, something that seems to inhere in the eye or optic nerves, something that no amount of teaching and experience in painting can do more than approximate. Colorists are men apart. At one period they suddenly start up in Holland and form a great art epoch. In the middle of the nineteenth century they appear with Delacroix and the Barbizon men in France. But always they are antagonized and decried by artists and critics who lack the gift, and see nature in outline rather than in color. Being in the majority, the

latter persuade the public that color does not count for much when weighed in the scale against form. And they are entirely honest and convinced in this opinion. Slowly, however, the public comes to see that for such art-products as painting the most important ingredient is color, and in time the colorist is exalted.

How much more is the color sense vital and necessary in the artist who attempts stained glass!

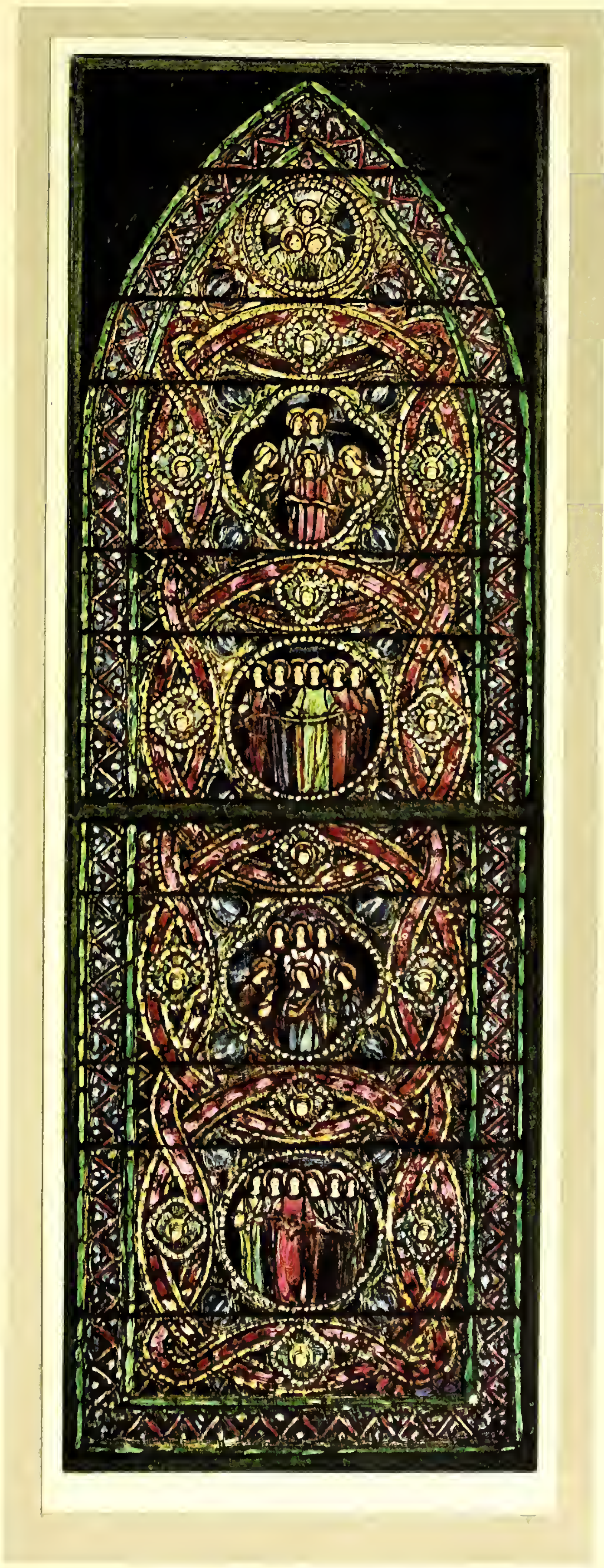
Consider a moment the difference between looking at a painting on a solid surface darkened still further by the paint, and looking into a material in which color is fused, this material so placed that light falls through it!

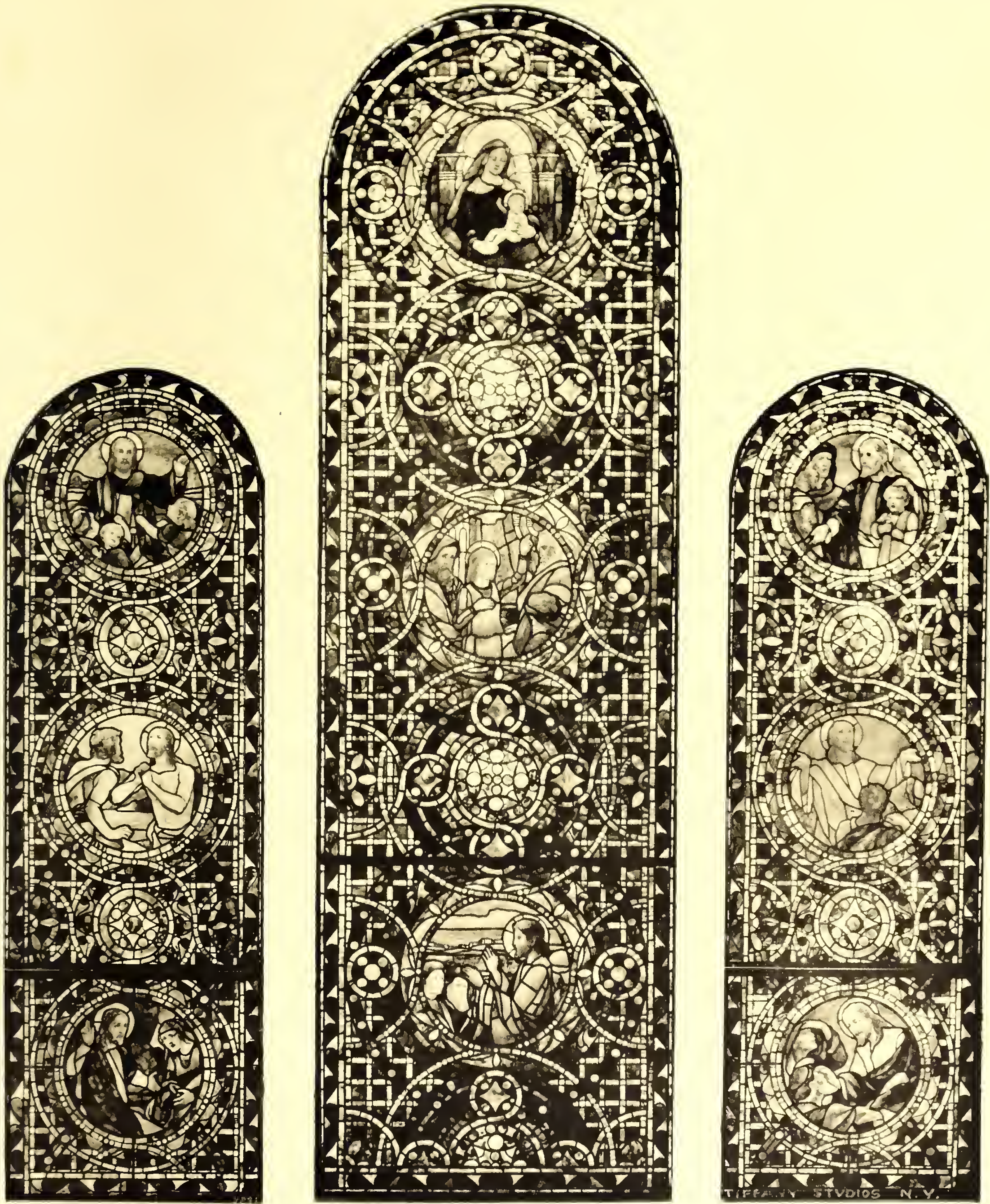
Coming back to America where the skies and atmosphere, summer and winter, seem to ask for interiors sheltering the eyes from an excess of brilliancy, Tiffany could not but realize that here was a branch of art neglected, or rather badly served, in Europe, which might offer new fields of delightful work to the new world.

The first windows were mattings, lattices of wood or open-work stone, skins, or slabs of ice (under the Arctic Circle), horn, thinly wrought alabaster, and at last glass. And the first glass we may imagine as a material discovered by potters in search of glazing to make their pots impervious to water, which glaze, built up by hand in shapes just like clay, and then subjected to the heat of the kiln, formed the earliest vessels of glass. That the Byzantines had glass windows on a small scale is pretty certain, but window glass as we know it must be credited, not to the people of the Mediterranean, but to those of northern Europe. If they did not invent the use of colored or stained ecclesiastical glass, which, apparently, they took after the Crusades from the expert glass mosaic artists of the late Greek empire, it is probable that they did begin the use of glass for ordinary windows, pushed by a climate which, in winter at least, exacted a closed room lit from outside.

Language gives us a clew.

The word *glass* belongs to the Teutonic languages and has been allied




TIFFANY STVDIOS N.Y.

to glow and glare, as if it meant the "shining" thing. But the Kelts, who preceded the Teutons in Europe, have the same word for a color. Irish *glas* means gray or bluish gray, like steel. Welsh *glas* means "blue, greenish gray." *Glaukos*, "shining" is a close parallel in Greek. A similar word for amber among the Teutons got into late Latin as "glesum." We may imagine that the earliest glass imported by the Phoenicians into northern Europe was a kind of bottle glass in gray and blue tones and was called the "blue-gray" stuff by the Kelts, who gave the word to the Teutonic tribes, alternately conquered by them or their conquerors in turn. As soon as glass was made in Europe it would be natural that those who could afford the luxury would substitute this material for the parchment or horn used by primitive races of the north in their narrow window openings to let in the light and exclude the cold.

Originally, we must argue by analogy, windows or the gratings in the window were stopped by materials which allowed some light to filter through, but did not permit those inside to see out. Transparent glass is a comparatively late invention. When stained windows, therefore, came up in Europe it found people indifferent because unused to the convenience of transparent panes. The heavy leads and thick, dark-toned panes in old cathedrals, like those of Chartres, Beauvais, York, etc., delighted their eyes and did not bother them by reason of the dimness of the light that fell through. This is a point which should be remembered by those who study old and modern glass windows. There was beauty of color in windows before clear glass panes, transparent as air, so much as existed in Europe.

Cennino Cennini, who was living in Padua about 1400, gives in his *Trattato della Pittura* directions how to glue sheets of paper together to obtain a piece as large as the window, "draw your figure first with charcoal, then you will fix it with ink, your figure being completely shaded as if you were drawing it on a panel. Then your master glass-worker takes this drawing and spreads it on a table or board, large and

flat, and according as he wishes to color the draperies, so bit by bit he cuts the glasses, and gives you a paint which is made of well-ground cuttings of copper, and with this paint with a small minever brush, piece by piece, you paint the shadows on the glass, matching the folds together and the other parts of the figure according as the master has cut the pieces and laid them together; and with this paint you can always shade—on every kind of glass. Then the master, before joining the pieces together, as is the custom, bakes them moderately in iron cases on hot coals and then joins them together. * * * There is this advantage, that it is not necessary to paint the ground color, as glass can be had of every color."

Nowadays, in America at least, much greater care goes to the preparations for a window. A color sketch for composition and the distribution of colors leads to the grand cartoon. From this two transfers are made on paper. One is kept as a guide for the artist who arranges the leads and puts the glass pieces together. The other is divided on the lines of the leads, being cut into separate patterns which are arranged on a glass easel; this is placed against a strong light. The patterns are easily removable. Selecting the sheet of glass which seems to hit the right color for a given section of the design, the artist removes the paper pattern at that point from the easel and passes the sheet of colored glass between his eyes and the opening left by the pattern he has removed. Marking that part of the colored sheet which has been selected, the glassman then places the paper pattern upon it and cuts round its edges with a diamond. The piece thus shaped is then fixed with wax to the glass easel whence the paper pattern has come. Thus, piece by piece, glass in various colors and shades takes the place of the paper. Changes are often made. If a color will not come otherwise, a second colored piece is placed over or under the first in order to obtain the required tint or tone; this is called plating or "cased" glass.

The leads are also different from mediaeval leads. They are not so

heavy, and they are used so as to aid rather than interfere with the picture. Attempts have been made successfully to suppress the leads, sometimes by fusing together adjacent edges of glass patterns or even by arranging the patterns between two great sheets of plate glass, the transparent sheets acting as supports to keep the window from buckling and the pieces from shifting from their proper order. Beside and beyond all these and other mechanical contrivances, more important than these, is the fact that we have a far wider range of color in glass than did the mediaeval workmen.

The result of all these experiments and inventions may be summed up in the statement that modern American window painters can use glass as a painter uses his colors, lightening or darkening his work at will. By the employment of opalescent glass they can produce such effects of marvellous delicacy as Corot achieved beyond all other oil painters in his treatment of white clouds shot with tender rosy tints.

As early as 1875 Mr. Tiffany was at work on inventions which tend to minimize the use of enamels not only for draperies but for flesh tones. At Thill's glasshouse in Brooklyn he succeeded in obtaining some glass which could be used for draperies without further painting and firing. But it was not till 1878 that he established a glass-making house of his own. Andrea Boldini, of Venice, who represented himself as one of the workers in the Murano factory under Dr. Salviati, was in charge of the furnaces. This house burned down, as did a second. From about 1880 to 1893 Mr. Tiffany experimented at the Heidt glass-house in Brooklyn, constantly improving upon his original ideas and learning to his cost that it would be useless to expect to make really beautiful windows unless he could control furnaces of his own where his ideas would be carried out without interference from those who either could not or would not understand.

Finally, in 1893 a glasshouse was established at Corona, Long Island, and put in charge of Mr. Arthur J. Nash, a practical glass manufacturer from Stourbridge, England, who superintended the building of the

factory. In 1902 the title of the factory became the Tiffany Furnaces. Although once destroyed by fire this establishment remains and flourishes.

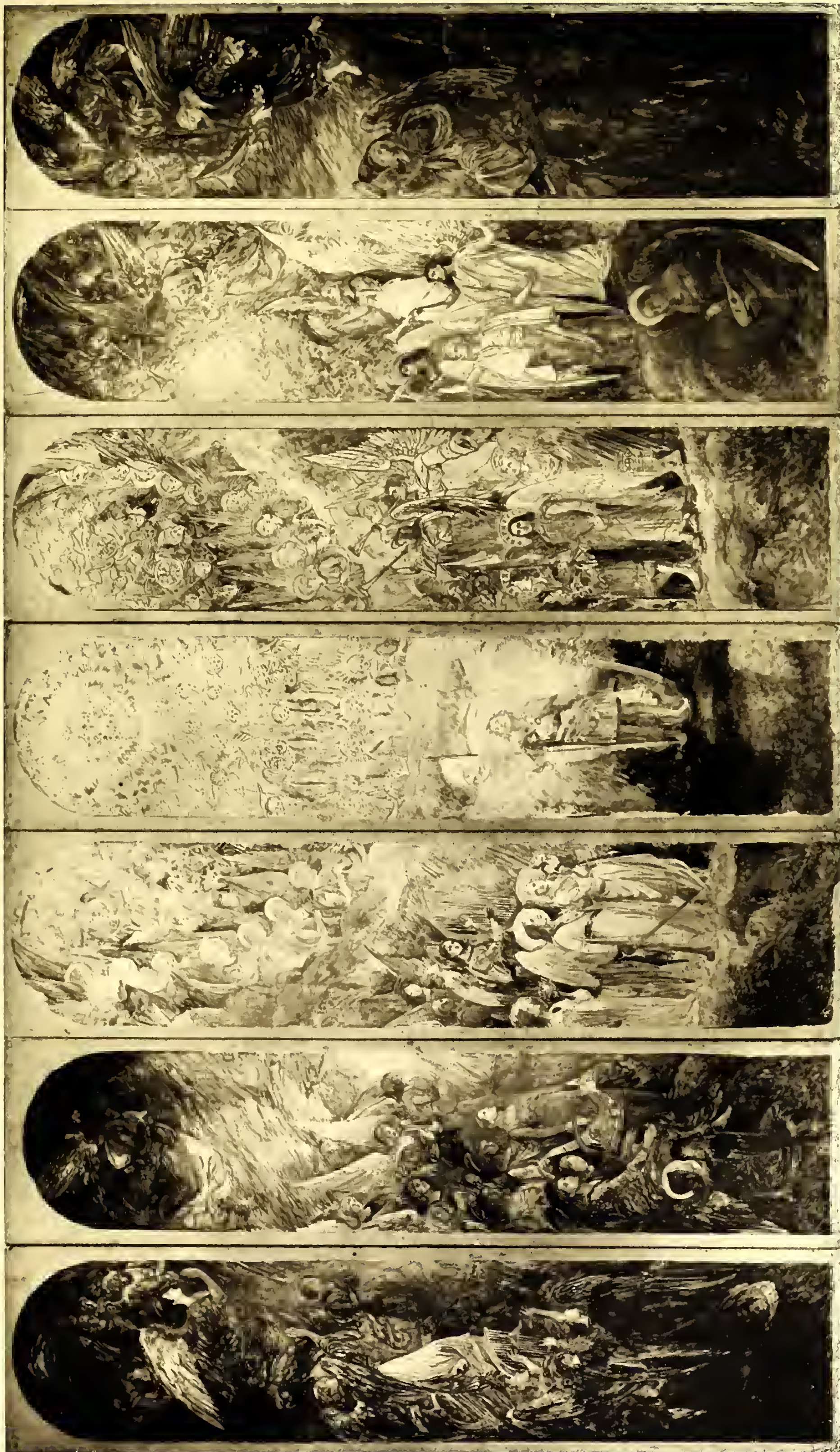
It was in 1878 that Mr. Tiffany had an opportunity to put his ideas of a church window into operation. English and Continental glass relied for effects of perspective, light and shade and details on surface paints or pigments burned or fused upon the glass, after the fashion Cennino Cennini described five hundred years ago. Starting from the principle that these effects ought to be expressed in the substance of the glass itself, he sought to make a material in which colors and combinations of color, hues, shades, tints and tones should be there without surface treatment, so far as possible.

"The Four Seasons," a domestic window exhibited in Paris and London, illustrated here, was wrought in glass without the employment of any pigments.

"The Valiant Woman" was executed in the same fashion in 1902 for Mr. T. E. Stillmann and placed in the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn Borough, New York City. It is a double window in which architectural and tree motives are used to balance the composition, and the lead lines reinforce the main outlines of the figures. The only concession to enameling is found in the faces of the valiant woman and the Orientals gathered in admiration before the terrace on which she stands. The lower squares of this double window not shown here are richly colored with marble tones and flower decorations. They carry inscriptions:

> THE WOMAN THAT FEARETH THE LORD, SHE SHALL BE PRAISED. GIVE HER OF THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS AND LET HER OWN WORKS PRAISE HER IN THE GATES.

In an article called "American Art Supreme in Colored Glass," contributed to the *Forum* in 1893, Mr. Tiffany deplores the fact that while "to-day this country unquestionably leads the world in the production of colored glass windows of artistic value and decorative



SPRING
ABUNDANCE AND PEACE AND PROSPERITY
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importance," yet the managers of the World's Fair at Chicago had not made provision for showing American windows. "An intelligent exhibition would have aided greatly in crushing out the purely commercial spirit which too often invades this field." In this paper Mr. Tiffany had the boldness to compare modern American glass with mediaeval and to its advantage. "I maintain that the best American colored windows are superior to the best mediaeval windows."

In the old windows the folds in the draperies were obtained by placing pieces of glass of the same color but of various shades side by side, or by painting the shadows upon a sheet of glass with a brown enamel. In America a pot-metal glass is forced into folds and wrinkles while in a molten condition; these folds are adaptable to many forms of drapery. Such glass gives the effect of light and shade in draperies without using so many lead-lines and doing away altogether with paints and enamels.

"In the windows of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, for example, the foliage and colors were produced largely by means of stains and enamels, in this country we produce foliage by introducing into a sheet of glass while molten, other pieces of glass of the proper colors, having stems, leaf and flower forms."

Mr. Tiffany spoke with authority, from long experience and after many disappointments in men and materials. The next seven years were crowded with interest. Success crowned the efforts which had extended *crescendo* for at least two decades. At the Universal of 1900 in Paris he took the Grand Prize and was decorated Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

One point touched upon by Mr. Tiffany should not be overlooked. The new method demands much more thought and care on the part of the window designer. He can not turn his sketch over to the foreman and expect results worthy of his reputation. He has to superintend every stage of the work just as carefully and with the same zeal as during the evolution of an oil painting. For as in painting the introduction of a

color in one part of the canvas, or of a tint or tone, has its blissful or baneful effect upon all that has gone before, so with a stained glass window; no other eyes than those of the original artist can tell whether the fresh note added to the rest is the right or the wrong one. Infinite, endless labor makes the masterpiece.

Three lancet openings of a window in Christ Church, Fairfield, Connecticut, consist of medallions containing religious groups set in an elaborate system of interlaced decoration. The subjects of the medallions are Christ as infant, with the doctors in the temple, exhorting, calling the children to him, healing the sick, raising the dead, etc.

A decorative cross of interlacing lines and ribbons set against rich tiles belongs to 1908. It is purely secular and depends for its effect on the deep and glowing tones as much as on the original design.

A sylvan composition of two girls in the woods plucking flowers by the brink of a stream represents windows for the home.

But it would be too long to enumerate the windows for churches, public buildings, and homes which have issued from the Tiffany studios under the direction of Louis C. Tiffany. American glass has had a distinguished originator and forefighter in him. He has had to contend against the tradition in the Episcopal Church of the United States which looks with reverence toward the Church of England, whence it sprang. The prejudices of clergymen and vestrymen are in favor of British glass for windows, notwithstanding its coldness and lack of character. There is no reasoning with a sentiment. It affects our church architecture in general with a sameness and a tameness truly deplorable.

CHAPTER III

FAVRILE GLASS

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However, it was not by the way of stained glass windows that Louis C. Tiffany won his widest fame. His protest against certain great American expositions for their neglect of American stained windows (published in the *Forum*) was necessary, because the managers of such fairs declined the expense of preparing suitable halls with day and night lighting such as are needed for the proper exhibition of stained glass. They are indeed unwieldy objects to exhibit. Not so the small glass objects for the drawing room, the dining table, the boudoir. Ancient glass of Chinese, Venetian, Bohemian, British make has made the circuit of the world. The somewhat mysterious but once very famous myrrhine glassware, under the Caesars, left nothing to be desired in the admiration of classical writers or the sums spent on their purchase by the collectors of the day.

Tiffany, as we have seen, experimented in various glass furnaces, and finally in his own, upon the colored glass used in draperies and shadows. Much pot-metal of very glorious color could never find a place in windows. Stores of it accumulated; it was evident that an industry pushed so far ought to strive to lower the annual deficit by the utilization of by-products, just like any other. This was one but by no means the only reason for the attention he turned to small glass and the production of a very popular, very varied and beautiful glass of novel quality which received the title FAVRILE as a name easily spoken and readily recalled, the root being *faber*.

Favrile is distinguished by certain remarkable shapes and brilliant or deeply toned colors, usually iridescent like the wings of certain American butterflies, the necks of pigeons and peacocks, the wing-covers of various beetles. Its commonest use is for flower vases and table decorations, but it is also employed for plaques on the wall like the decorative glass boards that Clément Massier makes at Golfe Juan, pressing them into low reliefs and charging them with flame-colored glaze. It is employed in mosaic and the tiling of floors and walls and more recently for table services to fill the rôle usually allotted to chinaware. Toilet boxes, trays, bonbonnières, vanity, snuff and cigarette boxes, great vases, lamp shades, tea sets, what-nots—there is scarcely a field into which favrile has not entered with success. From the first it was popular. Though in the matter of stained glass windows Tiffany had to deplore a preference among the clergy for the cold and dull output of British studios, the appeal made to the people's love of color was not misunderstood when it came to small objects.

Such success demonstrated a current in popular taste on which other glass makers were eager to embark, and favrile soon received that mark of honor which is called the sincerest flattery. Bohemian glassware appeared in the American market copying some of the forms and trying to imitate some of the colors of favrile, while appealing to the multitude with low prices. The peacock-feather design was a favorite. But the colors were thin and flat when compared with Tiffany pieces. Better results were obtained in Vienna where one maker, analyzing the ware and following closely Tiffany's models, produced copies of the original pieces not without success. But he found that the way was long and very difficult. What was needed was a system which would produce as brilliant results cheaply enough to overcome the costs of transportation; the copyist found it too expensive.

In pursuing his experiments in what is known as favrile the artist

was attracted by the effect of colored glass immersed in a solid sea of transparent crystal. The old Venetians used to imprison gold foil, forming therewith figures in the bottom of drinking cups. Figures and pictures caught in glass like flies in amber are not unknown in the past. But here again Tiffany produced something new. For a time he devoted himself to the production of charming little petals, flowers, leaves in glass, which were assembled in proper natural order and then annealed all about with clear glass until gradually a vase was formed, in the solid stem of which or in its broad thick bottom the flowers hung suspended. This style of vase, however, can never become widely used because the extreme difficulty of its construction makes its cost too great. They will soon become rare. Given another artist placed in similar conditions who is intensely interested in the experiment and can devote the time to it, and similar results may be obtained.

The development of iridescent colors and all the varied hues and shades in favrile glass calls upon chemical knowledge and makes the production of new combinations a very fascinating occupation. Ancient Greek and Roman glass subjected to the disintegrating effects of burial for long periods in a humid soil has produced objects of great attraction to amateurs, some of whom devote themselves to their collection. Just as modern painters have tried to rival in painting the tones effected by age on old pictures, so in his favrile glass Tiffany has vied with that beauty which has been added to antique glass by the centuries, aided perhaps by the oily contents of such receptacles as were filled with cosmetics and other unguents. His taste in color has found expression in a thousand articles of applied art; these, occupying prominent places in households, have exercised a happy influence on the taste of citizens. It is obvious that such influences exist and make themselves felt; but that is seldom thought of. Yet the fact that things of daily use like lamps, flower-vases, and toilet articles reach a wider public than do paintings and sculpture

make the "decorative" arts more important to a nation than the "fine" arts. Hence the value to a community of artists who devote their talent to making things of use beautiful. They are educators of the people in the truest sense, not as school masters laying down the law, but as masters of art appealing to the emotions and the senses and rousing enthusiasm for beauty in one's environment.

CHAPTER IV

ENAMELS AND JEWELRY

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The writer has met several men who made a practice of collecting unset precious and semi-precious stones and carrying about with them a large wallet filled with the choicest specimens of their hoards. One was Henry Ward Beecher. They enjoyed handling these jewels and loved to watch them sparkle in the sunlight as they shifted them from side to side. One can imagine Louis C. Tiffany also doing this. But with him, if he ever did it, the act would have been, not a purposeless one of simple enjoyment in the glow and sparkle of jewels, but a fruitful deed, the first step to the production of some little work of art.

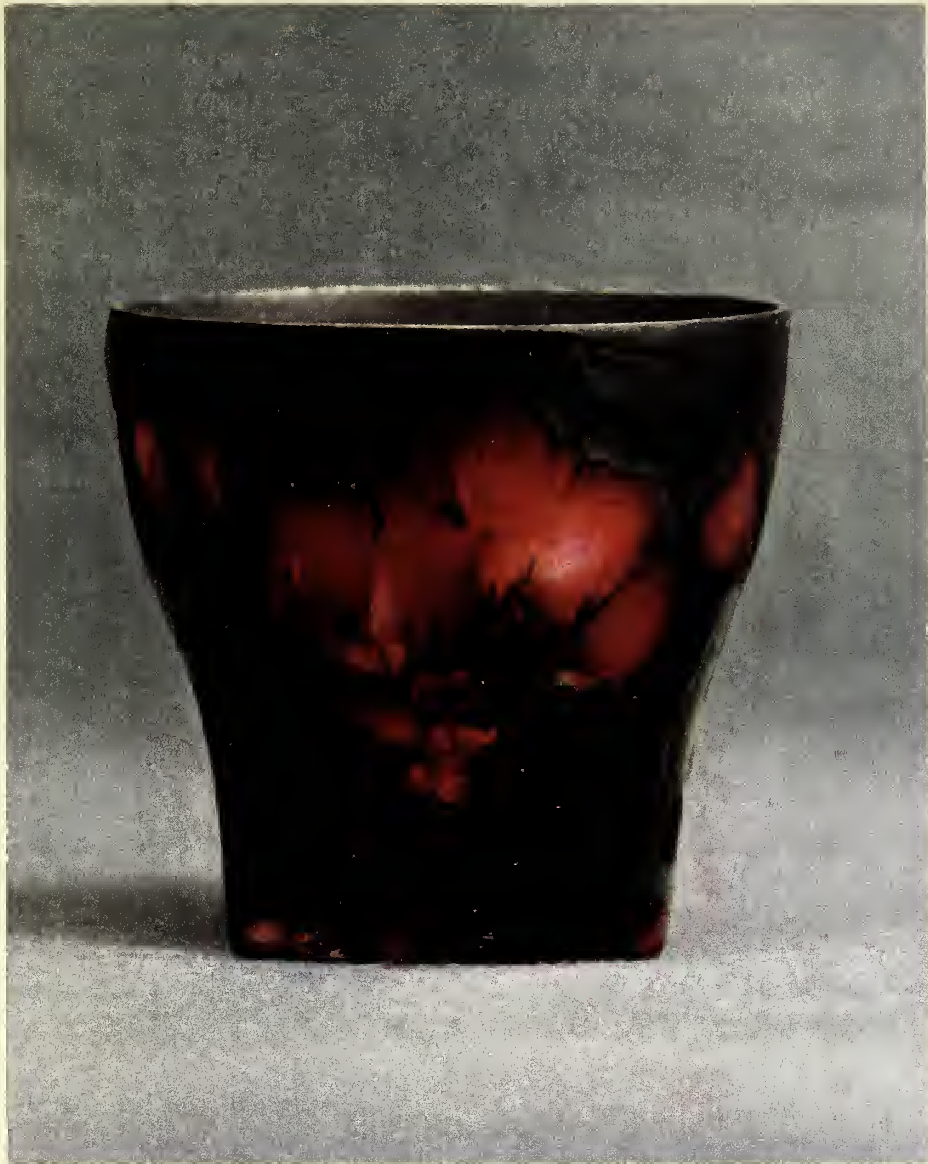
Stained glass windows and small objects in colored glass led their designer naturally, one may say inevitably, to a synthetic treatment of enamel and precious stones. A painter who is born with a sense for color—and he, strange to say, is not common—must revel in the deep-set richness of hue offered by precious gems and love the tones so lavishly presented by nature in marbles, onyx, malachite, and carnelian; in various shells; in pearls, opals and coral; in old amber and tortoise shell. Enamels on copper, silver or gold afford an almost inexhaustible variety of background against which these semi-precious materials may stand relieved—not to speak of harder stones like diamond, ruby, sapphire.

It is not hard to imagine the enjoyment which an artist of Mr. Tiffany's nature, training, and antecedents obtained from the exercise of his

faculties and taste in the designing of such rare and beautiful things. In addition to their flower-like colors, to their hues only rivalled by sunsets, rainbows and the northern aurora, these objects have an indestructibility which is very appealing to most men and women. Along with a seeming fragility like that of petals and tendrils of the vine they have a solidity of material and a thoroughness in workmanship which place them in a high rank, considered merely from the craftsman's viewpoint. Tiffany, one may say without exaggeration, has been the foremost exponent of the arts and crafts in America. And in no point does he better deserve the title of *fabrum princeps* than in the technical soundness of these pretty pieces. It is not for nothing that he is the son of Charles L. Tiffany.

The sixth floor of the great building on Fifth Avenue known as Tiffany & Company contains the department of original—that is to say individual and unduplicated—enamels and jewels designed by Louis C. Tiffany. A sketch by the master is taken in hand; often a second water color cartoon is made and from this is built up with wax and various precious materials the model of the coming piece. At various stages in its development the master is consulted. The gold or platinum, the silver or copper framework is made from the wax model by trained craftsmen and craftswomen and the enamels are painted in and fired. Then the materials which will not bear the heat of firing are temporarily put in place for a last revision. When the master is satisfied, the final touches are applied, the jewels or semi-precious materials are solidly joined to their beds and the object, a result of many consultations and many expert hands, is ready for the show-case.

Not only the favrile glass pieces mentioned in a former chapter but objects like those alluded to above are permanent exhibits in many museums, such as the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London, the Metropolitan Museum, New York, the Walters Gallery, Baltimore. Many



luxurious private houses have Louis C. Tiffany's enameled objects. His constructions in color for personal jewelry are favorites in a host of households. Owing to the extraordinary collections of all sorts of gems and colored stones amassed by Tiffany & Company, this department has a variety and wealth of materials to choose from, the like of which does not exist in America or in any known land.

One of the earliest designs for personal jewelry which occurred to Mr. Tiffany is the flower of the wild carrot, called Queen Anne's Lace. This charming weed is found everywhere. Its unpretending wheel formed of a great number of small white flowers, sometimes of a delicate mauve, will often carry a small dark floweret in the centre of the disk. This wheel is reproduced in white enamel on silver, with a garnet at the centre. A dragon fly for a hat-pin is enameled and set with opals on a platinum base. A marine motif, half crab, half octopus, with the writhing feet split into two or more special ends, is arranged for a brooch and set with opals, sapphires and rubies. This piece is now in the Walters Gallery. A girdle of silver ornamented with enamels, has berries formed of opals. A decoration for the head is a branch of blackberries, the leaves made of filigree of gold and silver, enameled, the berries composed of clusters of dark garnets. Another design is the dandelion full blown with seed, the "four o'clock." A third is a spray of the little *spirea* flower.

Another, likewise now in Baltimore at the Walters Gallery, is the Peacock necklace, the main piece of which is a mosaic of opals, amethysts and sapphires. The less large pieces that adjoin the centre are of enamel on gold repoussé work, lighted up with opals and rubies, emeralds being used to relieve the colors. The back of the big centre-piece has a decoration of flamingoes and the lowest point of the pendant below is a single large ruby, selected not for its costliness but for the exact shade of its red. Objects of this sort make one feel that the artist has studied well the enamels of China and

Japan without losing sight of those of Byzantium and the Italian Renaissance. Neither color nor design is Oriental, but it is certain that the Orient has had a stimulating effect, as we perceive to have been the case with Whistler and La Farge and many French painters and decorators. Tiffany has taken the best, namely, the spirit of the Oriental craftsmen, without falling so far under their spell as to become a copyist, and this independence and originality will be found in the form of his works as well as in the designs wrought upon them.

Among the most exquisite products of the Tiffany enamels are pieces meant to hold flower pots or cut flowers, decorative vases for the drawing room or dining table, trinket-holders for the toilet table, bonbonnières, etc. Some of these have been reproduced here by a color process to give some idea of their deep and glowing color scheme. Beside these warm and resplendent enamels the tones of old Limôges ware look formal and cold. The designs are commonly flower motifs which recall Mr. Tiffany's paintings of roses, rhododendrons and paeonies. They reflect the pleasure which the artist takes in color, analogous in music to the notes of the 'cello. Observe the small vase in the illustration which has in repoussé relief a number of toadstools in different stages of growth. The artist has succeeded in suggesting the very texture of the fungus. The red and rose tints of the plants and the varied greens of the vase form a sumptuous color scheme and lend to the small object that precious quality which is so difficult to attain. A smaller round pot with decoration of red flowers in relief makes the same impression. A wide mouthed bowl or cup with red flowers deep in the smooth surface, not repoussé, is notable for the simple elegance of its shape and the glow of the flower motif.

Next to the structure of the design is the color scheme in these and a hundred other pieces. Long practice in selecting glass for windows trains an artist to a certainty of eye which makes him instantaneous

in his judgment. He does not require a rule of color adjustment; it is more like an instinct. This allows the master to get through a vast quantity of work in a given time. Mr. Tiffany has his helpers so well trained that he needs to devote but a few hours a day to enamels and jewelry. It is through his study of flowers as a painter interested in nature and his delight in the growing of flowers that he has come to many happy adaptations of flower forms in enamel work and stained glass. Insect life and marine forms have suggested other combinations of lines and masses, hues and shades. He has followed the bidding "reach boldly out and grasp the life about you" as we may paraphrase one of Goethe's best known verses, and taken advantage of the endless wealth of precept and suggestion that lies around us in air and water and earth, in all the vast, teeming bosom of nature.

Articles of personal adornment are wont to be rated low throughout the wide field of art in contradistinction to objects of the fine arts. One must not forget, however, that they appeal to the very widest imaginable circle of buyers. Practically all women and most men take an interest of a more or less lively sort in things which they carry about their persons. It is well, therefore, that objects of the sort should be beautiful or at any rate exhibit some taste. One may say that the quality, the artistic quality, of the jewelry which is found among a people goes far to measure that people's level in art. Hence the importance of having artists instead of untrained artisans to supply jewelers with designs; hence the value to the people of Mr. Tiffany's efforts to supply a class of jewelry not only original and individual, but often very beautiful. Each piece acts as a little missionary of art and tries in its own dumb way to convert the Philistine.

CHAPTER V

TEXTILES AND HAND STUFFS

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One of the most interesting things in the study of the arts while tracing their development in the past is to note the action of one art upon another, such as that of sculpture upon painting, of mosaic on stained glass, of basketry on pottery and porcelain. Not only by peculiarities of modeling in ancient and in savage pottery, for example, can one detect that an original must have been a woven object which was copied in clay. Signs of this same ancestry cling to objects of more recent and higher artistic effort such as Chinese, Persian and European pottery and porcelain. There can be little question that a great number of designs owe their origin to textiles, and their wide popularity to the fact that such objects are easily transported. They formed a natural staple in the barter and sale between different nations for that very reason. What seems to have almost escaped notice is, that architecture itself has been profoundly affected in many parts of the globe by motives taken originally from woven goods. The façades of temples and palaces and communal houses in Yucatan and Guatemala are quite generally carved with decorative designs and figures in relief which suggest a woven textile ancestry.

The hut made of woven work in reed, bamboo or grass, the tent composed of cloth, of hair, wool, cotton or silk, have left their ineffaceable mark upon the architecture of more than half the peoples of the earth. Those who are curious in such matters will discover hints of a similar origin in Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Gothic

buildings—if not in their structural parts, yet often discernible in minor details.

It may be, that, next in antiquity to the decoration of the body with paint or tattoo marks came the adornment of the figure with a cloak or blanket, woven to a more or less intricate design, according to the social standing of the wearer. So, among the Kelts of Ireland and Scotland, who in all probability repeated what was common to the Gauls and other Keltic nations in Europe and Asia, the under folk wore garments of a single dull hue; clothing of several shades denoted a rise in social rank, while aristocrats and leaders of strong clans expressed their caste by the presence in the tartan of many colors. Indeed, old Irish texts which have survived lay down the rules which once governed the laws of Ireland and Scotland, rules which must have made it dangerous for men to wear more colors in their kilts and plaids than to their rank the law allowed. Recall Joseph's "coat of many colors." The Romans had very definite rules as to the colors of the toga, certain borders in color being reserved to Senators. Hints of similar ideas are found early in Greek and Oriental history, as when the historian remarks of some slave, pirate or low-born adventurer, with a disgust he is sure his reader shares, that the person thus characterized assumed the dress of a king, or else he may remark concerning some politic king, that, having taken a city formerly governed as a democracy, the king aforesaid entered the town without his royal robes in order to win the good-will of the conquered.

> "Through tattered clothes small vices do appear;
> Robes and furred gowns hide all."

Not the crown alone, but garments of a certain cut and traditional colors were signs of rank. And from Homer down we find Greeks and "barbarians" honoring the statues of their gods by clothing them in the most sumptuous of colored robes. Nations who boasted that

they never worshipped "stock and stone" none the less used such products of the loom to express their reverence for the Deity.

In remote ages it may have been woman who did the weaving, as she appears to have made the pottery for the cruder needs of the prehistoric kitchen. But as far back as records run it is man who appears to have furnished designs and directed the work of loom and kiln whenever the output was intended for some special magnificence or merely for quantity to sell in the general market. Thus, when Moses, alleging commands from on high, urged the Jews to bring him materials to form the tabernacle, we are told that "all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands and brought that which they had spun, both of blue and purple and of scarlet and of fine linen." But by divine order Moses appointed two men to confect the tabernacle, Bezaleel the son of Uri of the tribe Judah, who was an expert in metalwork and carpentry, and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, who was an expert in textiles. The vast fame of Egypt for its woven goods explains the presence of artist-artisans of this rank in the Jewish camps.

"Them hath He filled with the wisdom of the heart to work all manner of work, of the engraver and of the cunning workman and of the embroiderer in blue and in purple, in scarlet and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work and of those that devise cunning work." Aholiab is one of the earliest artists in weaving and embroidery of whom we have record.

At Troy the fugitive wife of Menelaos is described as "weaving a great purple web of double fold and embroidering thereon many battles of horse-taming Trojans and mail-clad Achaians"; and Andromaché hears of her Hector's death as she is "weaving a double purple web and broidering therein manifold flowers." Penelopé manages to put off the suitors many years by pretending to be engaged on a great funeral cloak for her father-in-law Laertes.

All these were home industries for family use. We may be sure,

however, that Phoenicians, Pelasgians and early Greeks drove a great trade in textile goods, carpets, hangings and shawls which must have been largely supplied by commercial looms conducted by families of artisans both free and slave. And there is no good reason to doubt that children were employed, just as they are to-day in Asia, to carry on the actual manual drudgery of the loom according to rules and regulations handed down in families from generation to generation, executing blindly many complicated designs, the origin of which was lost in the mists of the past. At Athens young girls made the peplos offered every four years to Pallas Athené, represented by her ancient statue in wood. But for the hangings in the Parthenon, about the colossal gold and ivory statue by Pheidias, it was Pheidias himself who gave the designs.

One need not be surprised, then, to find that Louis C. Tiffany has been tempted to make excursions into the field of the loom through the charm of textile work, in order to obtain rugs, carpets and hangings which will express his particular color sense and harmonize with certain given interiors. While he has never set up looms of his own, he has devoted a good deal of time to the dyeing and finishing of textiles woven elsewhere, taking loom works of a neutral shade and giving them art value under his personal superintendence. In this way he has made them vie with paintings for their color charm and greatly surpass paintings in purely decorative effect. Some exhibit changes of tint as they fall in folds and catch the light; their shadows are full of unexpected colors. On the other hand, the stately and sober-toned rugs and carpets of China, made for broad surfaces and calculated to enhance, not to interfere with, the richer walls and furniture of palaces and temples, have found him sympathetic, so that he has produced carpets of the largest size in which the designs are incorporated by stamping the material with patterns carved in wood, which deeply stain the heavy pile of the material in order to effect the designs and color scheme required.

It is the part of a rounded artist to know when and where the hot

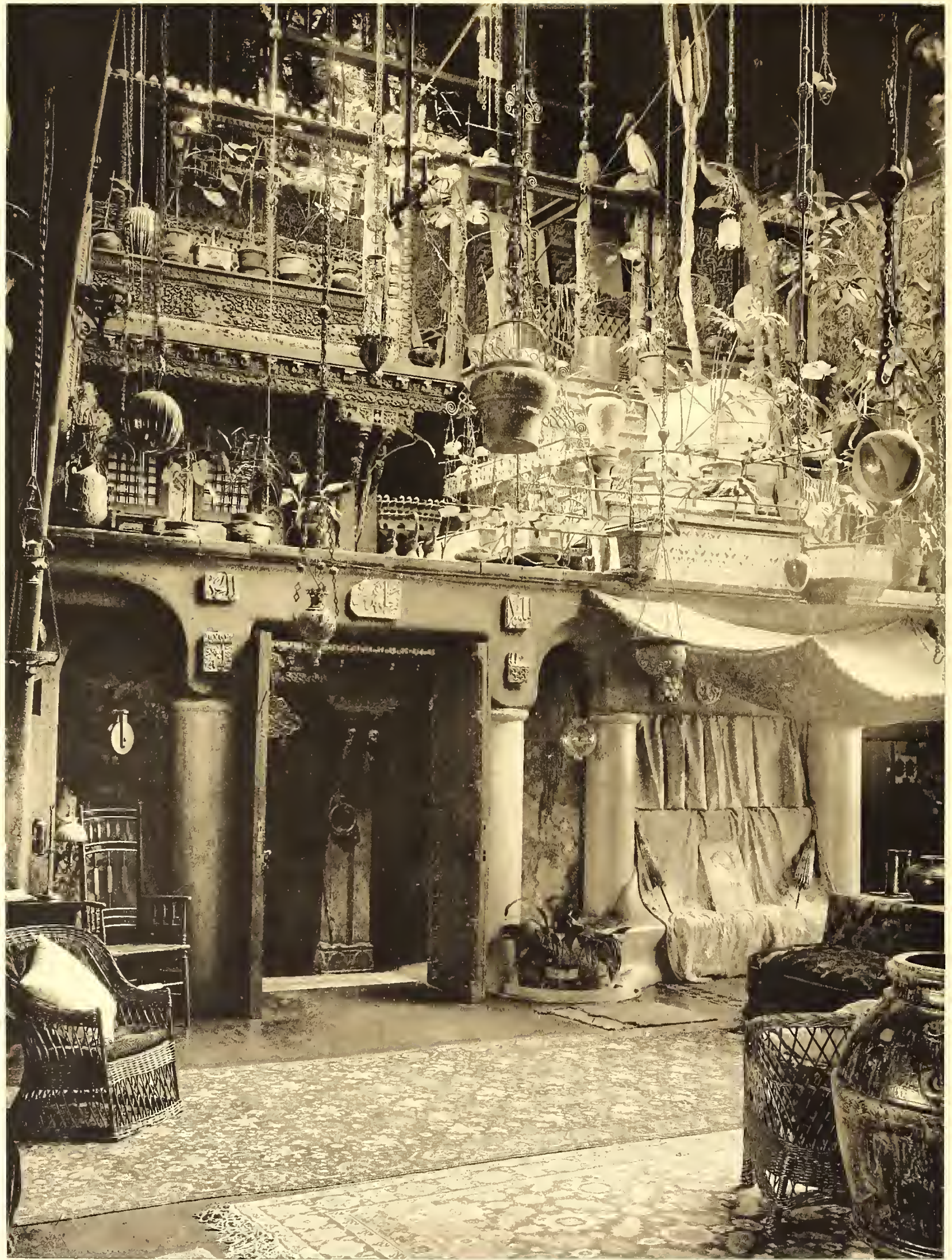
and the cool color, the rich and the pale tone should be applied. Tiffany has known how to run the gamut of colors in the most diverse branches of art according to the place the object in question is meant to occupy.

When one examines the textile objects in exhibitions of the arts and crafts one observes a great timidity among the artisans with regard to color. A similar reliance on neutral tints may be seen in architecture, sculpture, jewelry, pottery, even mosaic; so, one comes to the conclusion that the public dislikes strong coloration, or, at any rate, that the workmen and workwomen think the public does. The impression one gets is lack of courage, an obscure feeling that color is a danger; and perhaps that feeling is based on a real lack of temperament in public and in workmen which makes them unable to distinguish between deep, strong coloration and gaudiness. Perhaps it springs from a lack of naiveté, a presence of self-consciousness which combine to depress and sterilize art.

Certainly our climate invites to sumptuous colors.

It is therefore incumbent upon leaders in the arts to counteract this weakness on the part of the public by making people familiar with works full of powerful color and accustoming them to something richer and more virile than the drabs and greys and anaemic color schemes of the past. It is only fair to say that, consciously or unconsciously, Louis C. Tiffany has powerfully helped to educate the public in this respect.

CHAPTER VI
A DECORATOR OF INTERIORS



CHAPTER VI

A DECORATOR OF INTERIORS

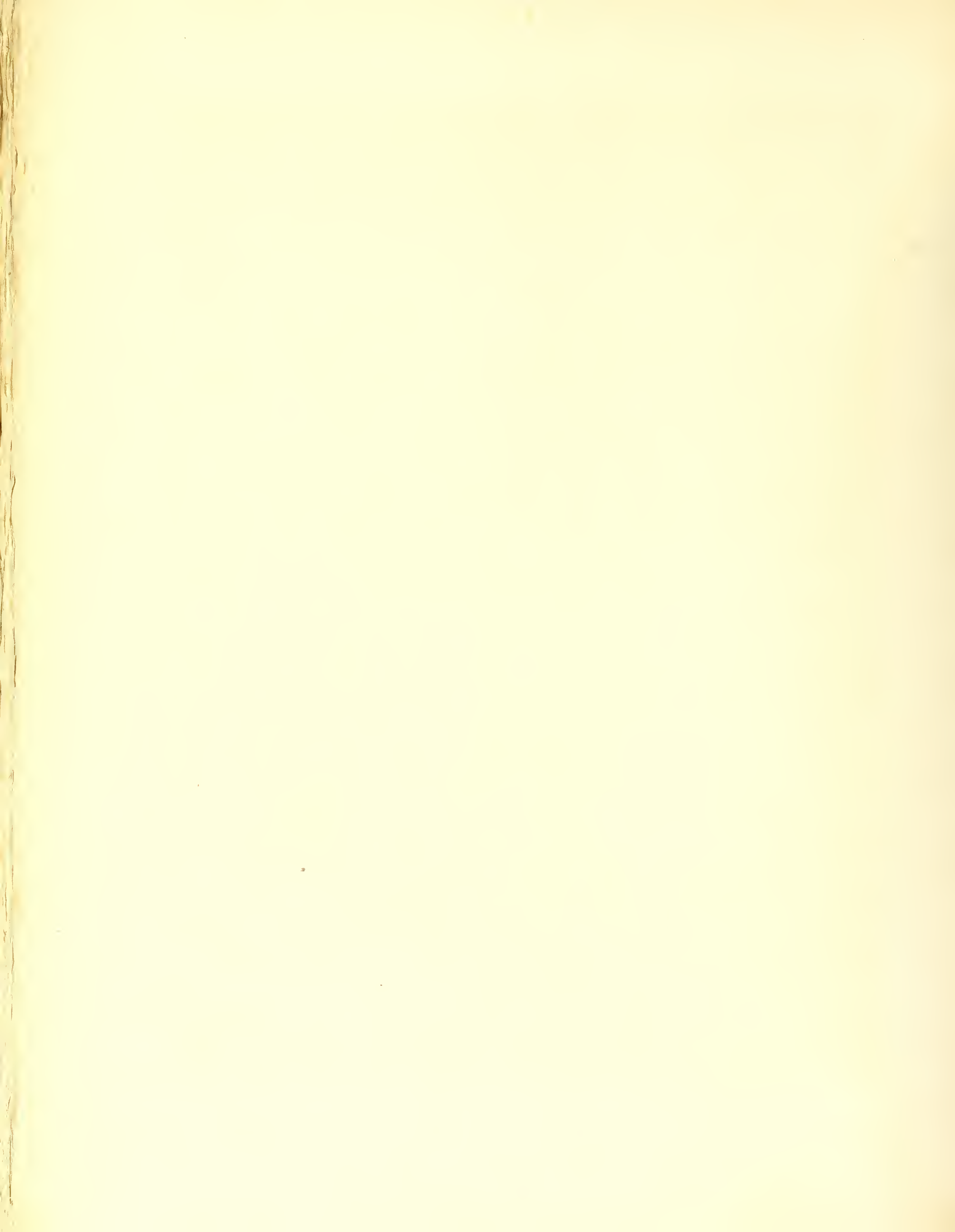
As we see by the example of Whistler and his Peacock Room, an artist who has the decorative feeling highly developed is always eager to carry out his ideas in a completely enclosed interior, where nothing shall intrude to mar the effect of the decoration as a whole. It has been Tiffany's good fortune to enjoy this difficult task on several occasions. To a certain degree it was possible in the case of the crypt in the cathedral of St. John the Divine; in that crypt the chapel niche at any rate, was given over to his artistic ministrations. By the use of mosaic he produced something which was well suited to that style of architecture in accordance with which the edifice was begun. If in the process, the slow process of building the Protestant Cathedral, the style was changed from Romanesque to Gothic, the latter appears only in the upper structure, in the choir and chapels. It will be impossible at this date to change the crypt and the main masses of the choir to Gothic. Now the Romanesque like the Byzantine style out of which it rose, is remarkable for broad spaces unbroken by windows, and for these spaces of wall the natural adornment is painting, or preferably mosaic.

Glass and stone mosaic may be said to be the parent of stained glass windows. Although we can find some traces of colored glass for window openings in the first century before Christ, yet it was the Gothic, a thousand years later, that caused it to bloom into a full-grown branch of beauty. Mosaic as it has been handled in Rome

for the copying of famous paintings during recent centuries is a mechanical affair, meant to insure permanency and easily justified by the certainty that the originals are doomed to a gradual decay. There is no art in such preservative measures. It is different with mosaics as they were employed from the fifth to the ninth century under the later Roman and Byzantine emperors, such mosaics as we see surviving at Ravenna and Rome, and, occasionally, in the shape of mosaic pavements, in different parts of Europe and northern Africa. In such cases we meet them as durable substitutes for wall paintings and carpets, not copies of such things but objects of an independent art.

In mosaics, almost as much as in stained glass windows, there is necessary to their eminence a feeling for rich color which must be innate since it cannot be acquired. The sense must be delicate also, because it depends on the surroundings and the light, whether brilliant colors or dull, whether simple designs or complicated shall be employed. When a mosaic floor is unearthed on the site of a Roman temple or villa we have no means of determining under what conditions as to lighting the artist carried out his task. We have the same difficulty, but perhaps to a less degree, with ancient sculpture and architecture. We must try to imagine what effect they had when entire, when clothed with colors, for both temple and statue were painted, while the effigies of gods and goddesses were often decked out with robes and ornamented with crowns, fillets, earrings and chains of gold. A very false idea of classic art grew up during the Renaissance period and persisted until the latter part of the nineteenth century, an idea that it was cold from lack of color. An artist who would like to employ the richest materials in architecture, sculpture, painting and the decorative arts finds even now the mistakes made in former centuries concerning ancient art hard to combat.

The Chapel of the Crypt was shown at the World's Columbian Ex-



SANCTVS SANCTVS SANCTVS DOMINVS DEVS

position in 1893 and was bought by Mrs. Celia H. Wallace of Chicago who gave it to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York at a time when the crypt was the only portion of the edifice where services could be held. Since then the choir has been built and temporarily enclosed. It has been calculated by those interested in such statistics that well-nigh a million pieces of glass mosaic, in which opalescent glass predominates, besides pearls and semi-precious stones, go to make up the several parts of the niche. The altar is of white marble enriched with mosaic, the emblems of the four Evangelists being composed of pearl and semi-precious stones. There is on the retable an inscription in mosaic referring to the eucharist. The tabernacle has a door of filigree metal similarly enriched. For the reredos iridescent glass mosaic has been used, the design being a vine and a peacock, a bird which is found in late Roman and therefore Christian churches, notwithstanding its bad repute as the bird of Juno and the emblem of vanity. It was in truth a bird beloved of the nations about the Mediterranean, who imported it from India. The early peoples held it in high esteem because it seemed to symbolize the sun with its wheel of brilliant, eyed feathers, and did in fact commend itself to the Hindus for two services it rendered: because it hailed the coming of the rains and because its clamor notified them of the presence of the dangerous big cats, the tiger and the leopard.

A series of arches, with ornaments in relief overlaid with gold and set with jewel-like glass, represents the ciborium. The arches are supported upon mosaic-incrusted columns. There are inscriptions of inlaid mosaics on the five steps which form the approach to the predella and three more which bring one to the altar. The numbers are symbolical. The upper three signify the Trinity, the lower the five wounds of Christ. In the crypt, lighted by pendent lamps, this altar and its approaches establish a brilliant centre before the eyes of the worshipers.

The Millbank or Anderson house on Thirty-Eighth Street, Manhattan, also the home of the late H. O. Havemeyer, not to speak of Mr. Tiffany's apartments in the Bella, his two homes on Long Island, and his house at Madison Avenue and Seventy-Second Street, Manhattan, to be mentioned later, are full of mosaic work on a greater or less scale. The largest single and complete work in mosaic, however, which has issued from the Tiffany Studios is a great solid fire-curtain for the opera house in the City of Mexico into the making of which a vast quantity of colored glass cubes has entered.

This fire-curtain is like a thick wall which separates the stage from the auditorium until the play begins. It is meant to move up and down as a single mass. A visitor to the opera house will see, blocking the stage, a vast window intersected by square mullions, beyond which a magical landscape unfolds itself. In the front are flowers and bushes. Then come lakes and pastures with foothills, gradually taking the eye upward to a mountain-range. Higher still lie the everlasting snows of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, the extinct volcanoes that look down upon the valley of the City of Mexico. Above these the clouds of sunset are tinged with red and gold.

This largest of landscapes is not treated like a panorama where the foreground is occupied by actual objects in the round, followed by some in relief, so that the picture gradually rises from things actual until in the canvas it becomes mere painted illusion. Tiepolo has made ceilings after this fashion. It is color wrought in mosaic from top to bottom. Very skillfully indeed is the illusion of an actual vista seen through a great window kept up. What adds to the interest is the illumination. By playing over its surface such colored lights as are usually part of a well equipped theatre, the most delightful variations in the picture are obtained. The illusion of a great window is complete. Here we have a luxury unknown to the opera and playgoers of London, Paris and New York. As soon as the Mexican audiences take their seats, perhaps before the orchestra begins to play,

they are offered a pleasure for the eyes most unusual and varied. And this should be noted more particularly: aside from the beauty of the picture presented the curtain is conspicuous as an example of decorative art or art applied to things of use. For it acts as a preventive to fire spreading either way, from the stage to the body of the house, or vice versa. It is odd that storm-tossed Mexico should be the first to possess such a colossal bit of luxury in applied art, but the order was given while Porfirio Diaz was still President and men little guessed how soon and suddenly his benevolent tyranny was to end.

To revert to comprehensive schemes of decoration: About 1884 the Lyceum Theatre was built on Fourth Avenue where now stands the enormous pile of the Metropolitan Life Building. Many may recall the lively air of this theatre within; it was decorated by Louis C. Tiffany whose ateliers for stained glass and mosaic, etc., were at that time, across the avenue, one street to the north. The scheme of decoration was a novelty and may be said to have ushered in those striking changes in auditoriums of New York theatres from bareness, or tawdry sumptuousness, as the case might be, to the rich and cozy interiors we now meet with in more than one playhouse. The color scheme, the materials used, and the lighting of the Lyceum were altogether different from anything we had had before. The Veterans' Room in the Seventh Regiment Armory was also Mr. Tiffany's creation. In this room the ceiling was enriched by the profuse decoration of its deep beams; the walls and fireplace were freely adorned with mosaic and metal, and from the ceiling large designs in forged iron were hung, resulting in a harmony and richness of effect rarely attained in interior decoration.

CHAPTER VII

A BUILDER OF HOMES

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A BUILDER OF HOMES

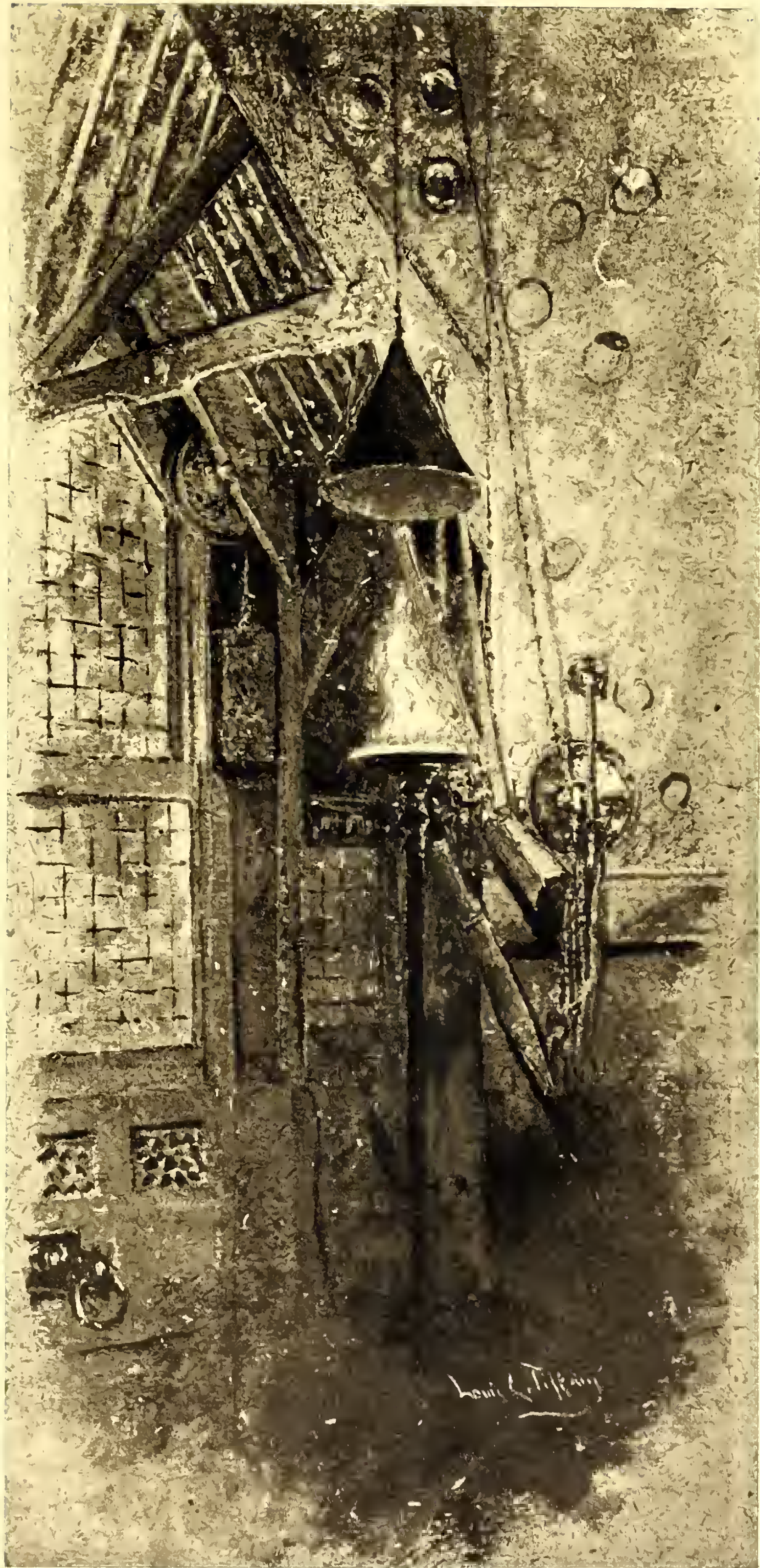
An artist who began at an early period in his active career to consider the decoration of interiors would naturally turn his thoughts to the making of a material home different from any that can be leased; all the more so, if he were a married man with a family. Mr. Tiffany did arrange a home in New York when his children were very young and made it an original and beautiful abode—but that was only the first of four homes he has successively fashioned, two in the city, two in the country.

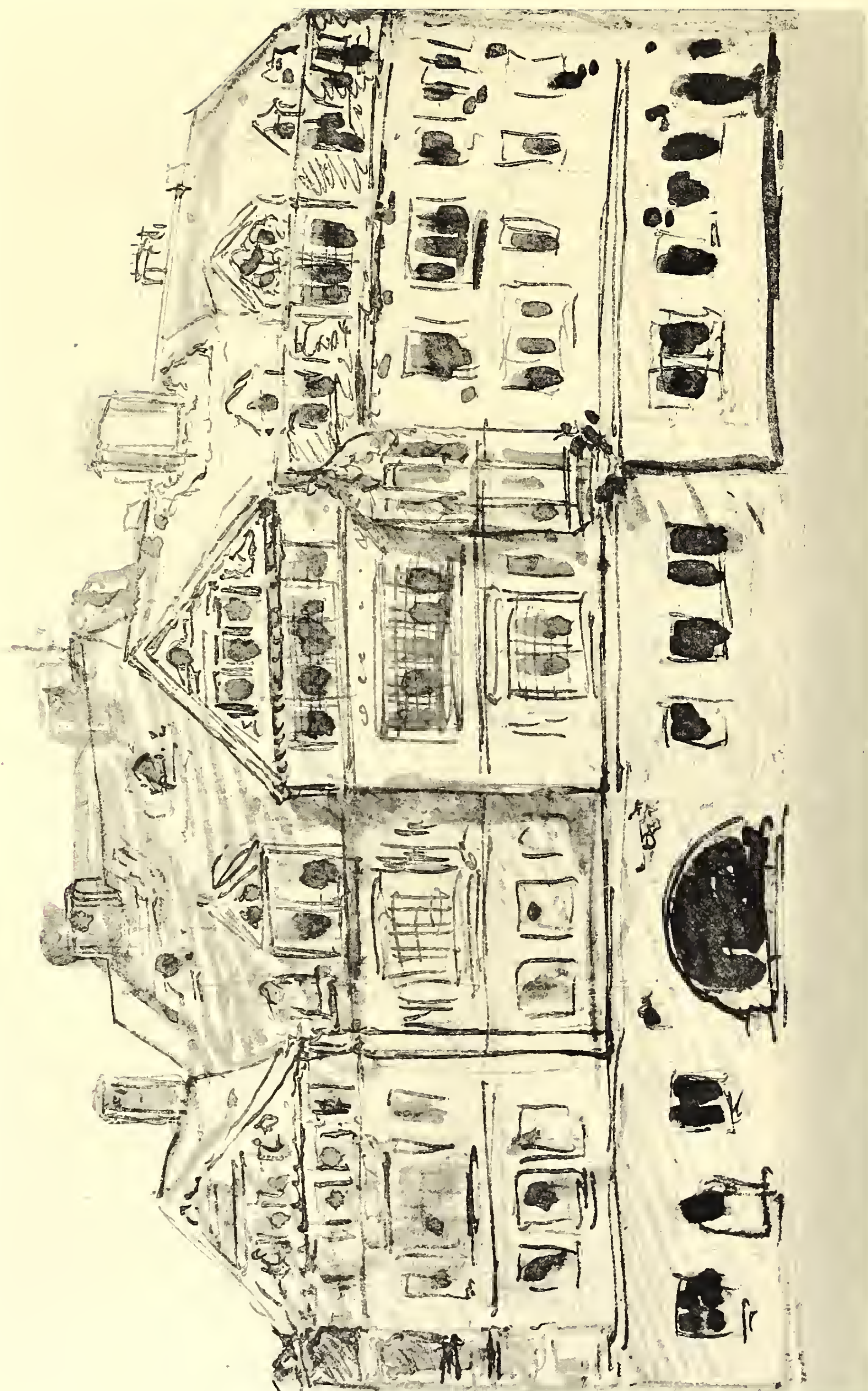
For the first town home he took the top story of a New York apartment house, the Bella, and transformed it into a charming dwelling. As you entered from the lift you found yourself in a lobby, lighted with stained glass, which reached high up into the peak of the gable where the beams themselves showed in a rich dull color-scheme lighted here and there with plates and studs of bronze, the broad surfaces of the beams showing the knots and grain of the wood. The roof-slopes were set with thick glass tiles to aid the light from windows, and the windows themselves were made up of rounds of glass of uneven thickness. What with staining and carving and inlays of metal and glass, the dark, brown-beamed ceiling made a foil to the warm India-red walls and trim. A novel effect in the treatment of window sashes was to be seen in the gable of this lobby. The stained-glass sash was heavy and to raise it there was need of a strong pulley. Mr. Tiffany used a large wooden wheel and chain and exposed these to view, turning them in fact into

decorative objects by simply providing a handsome wheel and chain. It would have been a pity indeed to box-in such objects after the ordinary fashion. The counter weight, a shallow box playing up and down a groove to one side of the window, was turned likewise into a thing of beauty. Not far off a standing torch-bearer with a hood suspended above it gave at night the pleasant effect of a moving flame. The hall adjacent, with its tall clock and metal-bound *cassone*, its carved settle and shelves set with spoils from Algiers, its hanging lamps and quaint Oriental keramics stamped the entrance to this apartment with the seal of the artist.

The dining-room gave a chance for many ingenious arrangements for the display of platters, plates and cups which were nicely calculated as to their effect upon the general color-scheme of the walls. About three feet from the floor ran a rack about the room to carry the larger plates, and on both sides of the tiled fireplace, as well as above it, were shelves and nooks and wall-closets for the more delicate ware, the silver, etc. The upper walls were hung with blue Japanese textile work embroidered with birds and cloud symbols. The tiled fireplace with its dogs and blazing logs was framed by a wooden hearth-front and mantel of the eighteenth century, carved in low relief with fan-shaped patterns. Above, against the wall, was a painting of pumpkins and half-stripped corn and a turkey-cock "making his wheel," but this painting was not set in a projecting frame, merely held in place by strips of brown wood. The brilliant yellow of the pumpkins and the red and iridescent blues of the turkey made this painting a focus of color for the manifold and varied notes which sprang from every part of the room, lined as it was with Oriental keramics and textiles, brass and bronze, silver and dull gold.

In the library he treated the fireplace in a novel manner, using the whole width of the chimney breast for shelving for books and bric-à-brac and forming out of iron plates an advanced hearth for wood fires without disturbing the hearth behind. It was a hearth before and


Louis C. Tiffany



concealing the hearth of the apartment which he had transfigured in so many other ways. The combination of books and open fireplace was an idea which commends itself to book-lovers, for on those shelves are places for favorite authors and, high above easy reach, shelves for particularly admired bric-à-brac. Wherever not covered by the books, the walls were clad with Chinese matting touched up here and there with suggestions of flower and leaf. The iron plates of the hearth and the metal doors of an adjoining wood-closet were decorated with discreet figures in rust-color and black, not painted so much as suggested, like the decorations on old metal pieces which have been toned down and almost obliterated by age.

It was by such methods that Mr. Tiffany began his home-making, having for a basis the topmost story of a New York apartment house. The late Donald G. Mitchell [Ik Marvel] made this apartment the text for a number of pages on interior decoration in "Our Continent" some thirty years ago, in which he noted the cleverness the artist showed in welding together into one harmonious whole the decorative art of the west and the east.

Walking up Madison Avenue one comes to a large building on the west side of the avenue on the northern corner of Seventy-Second Street. Its roof-line tells one that an artist who demands a north light for his studio dwells there. The upper floors of this building form the second home Mr. Tiffany made for himself in the city. Following in the lines of architecture first laid down by the late H. H. Richardson in the United States, the firm of McKim, Mead & White designed the structure in the modern Romanesque style which Richardson fathered. The massive arched entrance with its iron grille for a gate is powerful enough to support the tall superstructure in which the architects have employed a pleasant scheme of loggias and balconies to relieve the façade. The whole is capped with a grand slope of roof neither too large nor too meagre for the mass of the building. It is an apartment house, but ingeniously arranged to give variety of interior to the several

suites. They are served by a stair and an elevator running from one side of the wide, arched *porte cochère.*

While the structure is due to the designs of McKim, Mead & White the roof with its two stories superimposed has been designed by Mr. Tiffany. The harsh lines of iron roof-tree and rafters were overcome by the use of concrete and plaster, and the interior, of the upper or studio floor especially, suggested at the time the curved and rounded outlines one associates with *l'art nouveau;* but that was before reaction against formal, plumb lines was felt in this country. All the flues for chimneys belonging to the various apartments had to find their exit through the artist's studio in the roof. To meet this difficulty, for the most part they were assembled in the centre of the studio, and the stack to which they converged was made one of the chief decorative features of the interior. With brick and concrete this stack was modeled into a shaft as easy of line as the bole of a great tree. On four sides fireplaces were hollowed out so that the wide and lofty studio—almost as wide as the area of the building, high as the peak of the roof permitted—is lighted up at night in every direction by smouldering log fires. A loft above the main entrance to the studio gives variety to the upper part and allows the placing of an organ which is played from a seat on the lower studio floor.

Mr. Tiffany's amusement in shaping the first home from an apartment of the ordinary type was greatly enhanced when it came to the wide spaces and several stories at his disposal in this new problem. If in the former case he was able to introduce a number of space-saving inventions and turn the barren waste of a flat, one surprise after another, into an interior crammed with unexpected nooks and corners, in the latter he has shown that he might have made his mark as a decorator on a grand scale.

As one enters the studio the vestibule is like a bit from the palace of an Indian Rajah. Beams and trim are carved wood from Hindustan and the wall supports a trophy of curious Indian weapons. Entering

thence the lofty high-peaked studio, one sees lamps of Japanese bronze and unique favrile glass suspended from on high, each adding a new note of color or quaint shape. Great windows of dull greenish-yellow glass in the sloping roof give a general tone by daylight. From a southerly window below the eaves one catches a glimpse of Central Park to the westward. The organ loft is full of growing flowers and big Oriental vases. Colored tiles and the cinnabar red so much loved by the Japanese, iridescent glass and shelves full of keramics in subdued tones meet the eye in every direction. Add to all these objects the flowers here, there and everywhere—it is impossible to guess from the illustrations what effects are obtained in the way of color.

At night the glow from the hearths round the central stack lights up the brightest of the vases and bowls and plaques, gleams with dull rich notes on copper and bronze and throws broad spaces of the irregular apartment into deep shadow. The suspended lamps of many shades of red, rose, yellow and creamy white are foiled against the blackness of the high roof-ceiling. If at that moment a skilled hand touches the keys of the organ the great studio merges into fairy-land; and one would not be surprised to see a Persian prince of the Thousand and One Nights alight from his enchanted steed out of the great poetic past.

The main or lower story has for its chief apartments the great ball-room, the dining- and the breakfast-room. The last named looks eastward as befits the room for the morning's meal and is in light tones with windows filled with glass that simulates flowers and twining plants. A bay window looking southward down Madison Avenue has the jambs and divisions of the casements decorated with Japanese sword-guards, part of the great collection of those charming little art-works which Mr. Tiffany accumulated years ago before it became a fashion so to do. The drawing-room or ball-room has wall-cases on each side of the broad hearth containing rare Oriental porcelains and specimens of the rich pieces in favrile glass which have spread Mr. Tiffany's name about the world. But this large apartment is not so full of curious art-works as

the studio. There is, however, a niche treated in Persian fashion, at the back of which is a glass mosaic with floral design and a composition of peacocks which by itself surpasses in richness of tones any single other ornament of the home.

The dining-room is in its decoration the quietest of all. A great massive table, sideboards with display of silver, a wide hearth rather severely treated, a mantel filled with objects of art and, above, a colored plaster-cast relief by Theodore Bauer of New York. This room is to the westward and is lighted from the south. It is also the darkest room in the house, being used for the most part at night. The drawing-room, from its generous floor space and high ceiling and from its central position between dining- and breakfast-rooms, with a lobby running parallel to the north, makes an ideal salon for balls and receptions, since the apartments indicated, being on three sides of it, afford the best possible arrangement for the circulation of crowds without disturbing the dancers in the big apartment. Those who have experienced the difficulty in managing a host of guests in New York houses of no mean dimensions will understand the practical importance of such a plan. Add to this the "easement" obtained by access to the studio floor along broad and easy flights of stairs and still another way of access between the studio floor and the breakfast-room by other stairs, and it will be seen that everything has been done to make entertaining easy and effective.

What is particularly noticeable in this home is the fact that the great number of beautiful objects it contains has not, as we often find to be the case, taken from it the home-like quality. New York has houses which are no more, no less than museums, because the collections of antiques and other objects of art are so obtrusive that all feeling of the home has fled. In some way or other Mr. Tiffany has filled the house with beautiful things and yet retained the home. How he has managed it is his own secret. Perhaps like Topsy it "just growed". Loving the objects for their own sakes, he has added one to the other because he could not bear to exile any, and his fine taste avoided the error of so

placing them that they interfere with the ease of living among them. Should one attempt to mention them all, or a major part, this book would become a catalogue which no one would care to read.

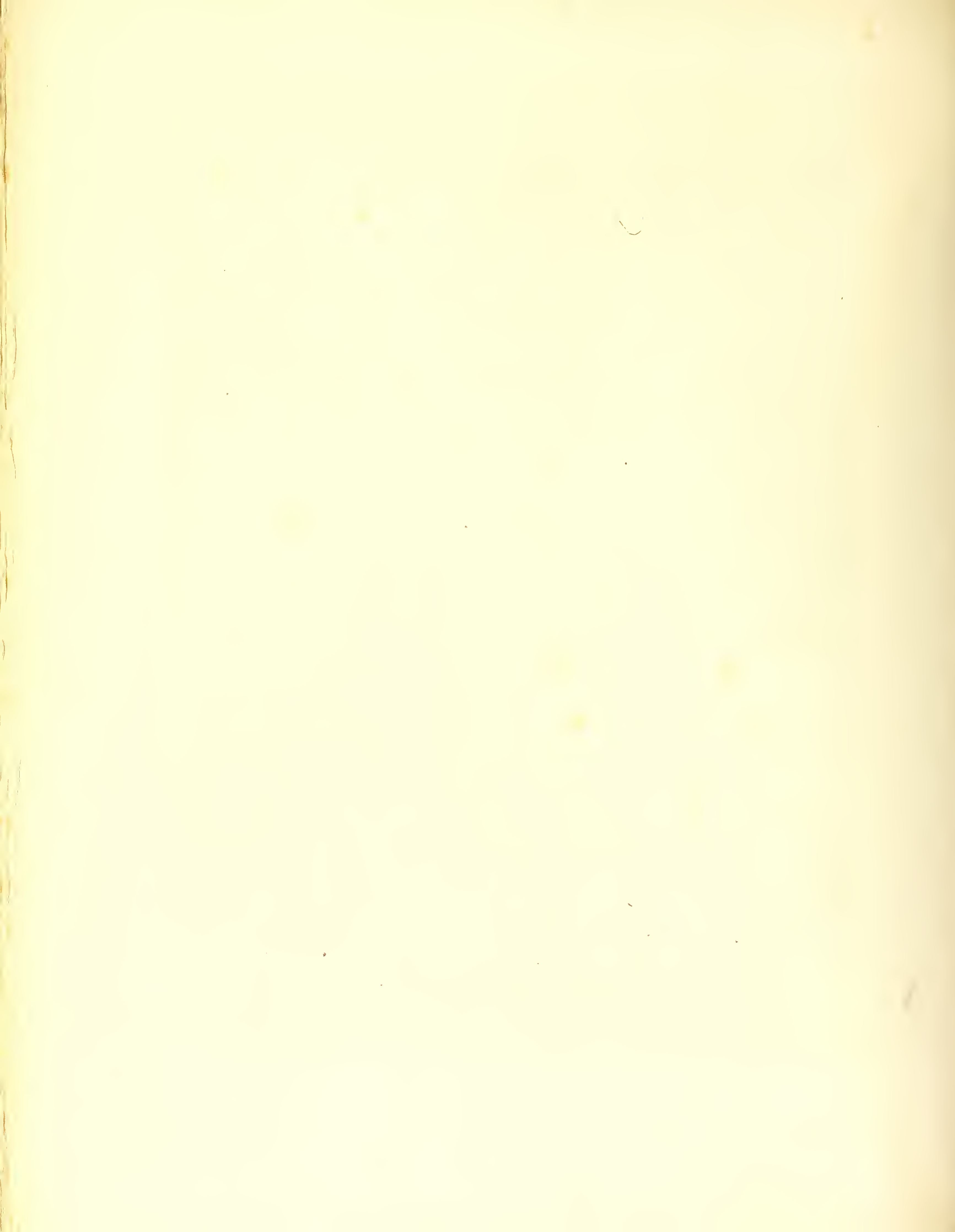
As in his city houses, so in his country houses. Mr. Tiffany made a home at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, before he bought and completed "Laurelton Hall." The house called "The Briars" still stands embowered in woods to the southward not very far away, where from its cupola one gets glimpses of the Harbor and Oyster Bay and Long Island Sound. The north shore of Long Island is hilly and notwithstanding a sandy soil enjoys a climate well adapted to all kinds of trees of the hardy sort and to laurel and rhododendron, vines and flowers. Owing to the ocean to the south and the Sound to the north the winter is not so rigorous as it is inland, while in summer an almost tropical heat added to the moisture in the air makes everything from corn to cactus grow luxuriantly. The adjacent waters, made famous early in the last century by the novels of Fenimore Cooper, are the favorite haunts of yachtsmen and used once to be the home of myriads of water-fowl until relentless shooting drove them away. It was here that Mr. Tiffany decided to pitch his summer camp back from the water among the farms and woods where he could sketch and paint and grow flowers and fruit undisturbed by near neighbors—yet within thirty miles of his work in the city.

But here too he found that there were limits set to his craving for larger spaces in the house and lands. To the northward, running down to the almost land-locked waters of Cold Spring Harbor, was a property which had been once used as a popular summer-resort for people who came by wheel, steamer and sail-boat to bathe and fish and camp and pic-nic there during the hot months. This property he bought, and began at once making roads and planting trees and laying the plans for a spacious country house with esplanade and look-out tower, palm house and greenhouses, stables for horses, and barns for cows, everything in short that goes to make a country place fitted to be lived in the whole

year round. And as it was in the town studio-home, so it befell with Laurelton Hall: the larger country home partook of his peculiar temperament and became a dwelling entirely different from any other in the land. Instead of being the expression of the idea of an architect, or that of architect and owner combined, a mixture of two individualities, a blend of two tastes, it is from first to last the house of Louis C. Tiffany and of no one else beyond his immediate family circle. Here, as his daughters married, they have built their summer nests on land given them by him for the purpose not far from Laurelton Hall, so that he has about him the new generation growing up.

In order to foresee the future and realize beforehand what he meant to do in and about Laurelton Hall he took the trouble to lay out a complete plan of the property in modeling-clay and wax, indicating according to scale the hills and valleys, the clear spaces and woods, the ponds and running waters, the mansion and its appurtenances, the stables and cow barns, the gates and docks. This was an application of his careful modeling and his sense for color to a new branch of art which we may follow up in the succeeding chapter.

Approaching by the drive, the whereabouts of the Hall is indicated by a clock tower that rises above the trees; but it is not till later that the main body of the building springs to view. There is something in the design of the house analogous to the lower or office story and the *piano nobile* of Italian houses. From the carriage drive one enters the house on the lower level of one wing and ascends thence to the main floor; but this floor is nearly on a level with the ground in front of the house. Here gravel walks, flowering bushes, a pool of water, watched over by an immense Japanese bronze dragon, occupy the space on the inland side where the tall clock-tower can be seen from finial to base. Entering from this garden of flowers, aquatic plants and fragrant bushes, one comes upon the central apartment, which has also running water, while through its farther windows one can see the blue stretches of Cold Spring Harbor. The tiled pool that freshens this middle room [simi-



lar to the central hall of a country house] gets its water from a glass jar of wonderful color shaped like the slenderest of Greek amphorae. This rises from the middle of the pool. The water bubbling over the slender jar gains a tint from glass and sunlight combined which can not be described by words. In position it is the centre of the house and in fact may be termed the most beautiful object among the many there. Strange to say, this glass vase changes in color, varies not merely somewhat in accordance with the position of the sun in its fainter shades, but changes during the longer lapse of time as if through some action of the constant running of the water over the glass. The vase, it seems, has a term of life. After a while the clear, pure transparency of the walls is dimmed and the glass is attacked by some corroding force—oxidation through iron in the water or disintegration through radio-activity in the liquid envelope—and the result is a change of tone which can be likened to nothing else. So ethereal, so exquisite is it that one seeks in vain for a simile. Unfortunately these conditions do not last indefinitely; the time comes when the once transparent and then wonderfully colored vase reaches the end of its career—cracks, shivers, explodes.

Perhaps we have something parallel here to the effects produced on ancient glass by burial underground for centuries, in consequence of which old crocks and tear-vials and potsherds buried several thousand years ago have accumulated inside their rough skins a wealth of color that vies with fire-opals, rainbows and the streamers of the northern aurora.

It is highly characteristic that Mr. Tiffany should be the one to discover this curious effect of running water on glass in the heart of his splendid country house. For who could appreciate better these fine shades of color, delicate as moonlight on dewy cobwebs, than the man who has fixed in favrile glass so many evanescent hues?

The music-room to the eastward, the large airy dining-room to the westward, and, farther on, but on a lower level, the palm-house with its vault of glass and the greenhouses, all these form a series of apartments,

each different from the other, each a surprise. From the outside the house does not look to warrant so much inner space. Toward the Harbor there are smaller rooms, tea-rooms, cozy-rooms and through the French windows one steps out upon an esplanade where masses of flowers are in bloom in the open air. The portrait frontispiece by Sorolla gives an idea of this. For the rest a series of admirable photographs reproduced here in black and white must aid the reader to conjure up some of the many, many charms of Laurelton Hall.

CHAPTER VIII
AS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

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Landscape architecture is a comparatively modern word representing a modern idea. Although the Persian monarchs had their "paradises," as we know through Greek writers such as Xenophon and Diodorus, enclosed pieces of land of varied surface, yet a paradise was rather what we would term a park for game, or Tiergarten on a large scale, with hunting lodge or palaces in it. We do not learn that the area was arranged with art, although something must have been done to change the wild land; perhaps roads were carried here and there and terraces built for the emplacement of residences. Doubtless the *temenos* or *tabu*-land about temples in Greece, Asia Minor and Italy received some care in the way of walls to mark the boundaries of the sacred spot; trees and bushes were planted for sightliness and woods felled to obtain views of the temple. It was not, however, until the Italian Renaissance, that we get a definite suggestion of landscape gardening or landscape architecture in connection with houses in the country, and even then strictly in subordination to the buildings it served and improved.

Chiefly through French and British masters the art of making a landscape has developed during recent centuries into an independent profession; nowadays we have enough professors of the art to warrant them in forming clubs and societies among themselves. There is one in New York, another in Boston; perhaps in other American cities like associations have been made. These men and women—for the art is

now practised by women also—are more or less at the mercy of the architects, who are apt to hark back to the old days and insist that the surroundings of a new building shall partake of the nature of a formal or Italian garden, rather than offer such cautious modifications of the natural conditions of the land as the landscape architect might prefer, if left to his own predilections.

The landscape architect, or "engineer" as he sometimes calls himself, should be an artist in the highest sense of the word. It is well with him if he has been a painter of landscape in early life, and learned to study and report the world about him in detail before attempting to mold and model on a grand scale, using hill and dale, woods and plains, roads and water-courses, lakes and rocks in such a way that he finally works out the picture his imagination has conceived, a picture that may take years to finish. We have on Manhattan, New York, an example in Central Park. Here did Olmsted and Vaux with consummate art fashion from the most unpromising materials a pleasure ground for the dwellers in a city which had been laid out with as little regard for the needs of the future as possible. And ever since this park was started attempts have been made again and again to pervert it from its original purpose and destroy its calm and restfulness, its picturesque and varied parts, by the erection of buildings of one kind or another. Landscape modeling is the art which may be termed the most refined sport for princes and kings. It is the most difficult for democracies, because the best plans are liable to be thwarted through the ignorance of superficial legislators and the knavery of place-holders scenting a job. Citizens have to be forever on the alert, or else, upon one pretext or another, the park will be wrested from them by men who swear and perhaps believe that they have only the good of the community at heart.

For his experiments in landscape architecture on Long Island Mr. Tiffany had the advantage of his training as a painter. In his early apartment dwelling, the "Bella," his love of flowers displayed itself and still more in his later studio-residence. Landscape painting gave him

the opportunity to study nature on a broader canvas, so that, when he arranged his first country residence, The Briars, there was little need of the professional landscape architect. After that comparatively limited experience he approached the problem of the land about Laurelton Hall with a confidence born of knowledge. He was ready to decide upon what objects it were best to show, what conceal, how these trees would look when grown, how yonder hedge would perform in time its purpose as a screen or as a background for flowers, or where the massed laurels and rhododendrons would best light up the woodland paths in midsummer. Evergreens and deciduous trees, oak and hickory, silver birch and locust, the stately tulip tree and straggling dogwood, cedar, beech and maple, wood laurel and "swamp honeysuckle"—each must contribute its note of dull or brilliant color and spread its bulk in the desired spot. The sport of the landscape architect never flags, for he plans ever forward, and, even when the needful time is granted, the best of plans of mice and men "gang aft agley." Diseased trees, like the chestnuts which have been devastated during recent years by a mysterious bark beetle, have to be doctored or felled. The tent caterpillar and gipsy moth must be combatted and sometimes a storm or a forest fire plays havoc with the carefully calculated scene.

Since the building of the greenhouses at Laurelton Hall Mr. Tiffany has had at his disposal in spring a mass of flowering plants with which to paint in living pigments the house itself and its surroundings, the esplanade and porches, the flower beds and pools. Besides the grand background of the Harbor against which the Hall is projected when seen from many vantage points, he has utilized springs in the land above to supply the pond over which the great bronze dragon broods. Water in larger or smaller sheets is so efficient a factor in landscape architecture that one feels its absence as a loss scarcely to be tolerated. The remoteness of the lakes and pools in the gardens of Versailles from Versailles palace is a detriment; their proximity at Fontainebleau is an asset in the beauty of the smaller royal abode. Cascades and *châteaux d'eau* at a distance

can not make up for a body of water in which buildings may be reflected. That is why moated granges with the old moats full of water, that is why Venice, Amsterdam, and Stockholm call you back to look on them again, why the Seine after all seems to make Paris, and the Thames redeem London. Laurelton Hall has no water spaces close enough to allow of reflections of its tower, but possesses running water which feeds the ponds and fountains and adds its pleasant murmur to the charming house fountain in the central drawing-room.

Professional landscape architects are sure to lean either toward the formal garden which derives its ancestry from Italy or the "natural" garden which came into favor in Great Britain during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A type is the well-known English Garden at Munich. This tendency has been pushed during the past century to the point of calling certain gardens, or parts of parks, a wild garden, in which the least possible interference is taken with rocks, grassy spots, trees and bushes as they are. When the wilderness is not sufficient an artificial wilderness is cleverly simulated.

Of the two camps thus formed Mr. Tiffany would be sure to give his suffrage to the latter, except that in the immediate vicinity of the Hall he has conceded to formalism that which is necessary to make the proper transition from nature to art. But even here he has not introduced the common device of geometrical flower-beds and hedges clipped into designs suggestive of architecture. In another chapter there was mention of the textile origin of designs for solid stone and brick buildings. To these may be added designs for flower-beds of a highly formal pattern which have received the name of "carpet" beds; and very correctly was the term applied, since the inspiration for their outlines and color masses came from Oriental works of the loom. Mr. Tiffany's idea has been, to so arrange the environage of Laurelton Hall that a very short walk carries one into the woods where it is possible to forget the existence of houses, streets, and roads in the presence of nature unassisted by the architect. He has directed the approaches by

the drive through the woods to the westward in such a way that one gets glimpses of the Hall from time to time only to lose them again, very much as the main driveway to the south of the Hall does not yield a sight of the building until one is close upon it. From Cold Spring Harbor, however, the tower and main building, the esplanade and greenhouses are clearly defined against the mass of many shaded verdure and form indeed the most noticeable feature of the shorescape for those who enter that deep bay from the Sound.

Owing, it may be, to the fact that a large number of our architects have studied at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Paris, the formal garden has gained great vogue in the United States where formerly the influence of Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted and his son of the same name, of Vaux, N. F. Barrett and other landscape architects by profession was exerted the other way, in the direction of the natural. It is not surprising that Mr. Tiffany, with his taste for the picturesque and his leaning toward painting rather than sculpture, toward color rather than form, should instinctively avoid the classical or formal and prefer the romantic or natural. Owing to the errors made regarding true classical architecture and sculpture from the Renaissance down to comparatively recent times, say 1850, the idea of color was almost eliminated from anything "classic." People did not realize that, in the high tide of Greek art, colors were used as lavishly as in modern Japan. Hence the growth of the cold and formal styles from whose ascendancy we are still suffering. Mr. Tiffany has been one of the most efficient among modern combatants on the side of those who have been trying to restore the balance in art and permit poor color-starved humanity to enjoy its birthright of splendid color. The late William Morris Hunt once made a protest against the oppressive reign of so-called classicism in architecture when he built an iron office structure on Broadway, designed the façade in a Moorish style and then used color lavishly to stamp the novelty with his vehement protest. Either because he could not give real richness to his innovation, owing to the ungrateful ground

upon which the color had to be applied or because the public was not ready for so startling a thing, the effort did not succeed. This front was soon repainted in apologetic, neutral tones and the protest failed. The energies of Mr. Tiffany, directed toward landscape architecture, like those he employed for other things, such as the making of rare glazes for pottery, have been exerted in so unobtrusive a way that results may have been readily overlooked even by his own family. A visit to Laurelton Hall with a thought to what the property once was and what it is now will be distinctly worth while.

AFTERWORD

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In the preceding pages, should they be thought worthy of a careful reading, it may be remarked that the words color, color-sense, color-feeling often recur. The value attributed to color has been denied by theorists who have started from an untenable assumption that there is a purity, there is a moral worth attached to absence of color, in opposition to sensuousness and luxury in a bad sense attached to its presence. This is a convenient theory for a vast majority of artists who are born without the peculiar eyes and senses that distinguish values and respond with sympathy to the vibrations of light.

Persian textiles, Japanese water colors, Chinese porcelain, Venetian paintings, the works of Rembrandt and Velasquez can be forced into appeals to sensuousness and luxuriousness only by a twist in the meaning of words which may satisfy the narrow-minded and the bigot. Some painters do make their mark without having this characteristic to any great extent, although it would appear from the nature of things that it ought to be the painter's strongest trait. Now Louis C. Tiffany belongs to the painters who can be embraced under the broad term of colorists; hence the frequent appearance of these words.

The United States have had more than their share of painters who come under the head of colorists, as, for instance in colony times, Gilbert Stuart and Malbone, and later on, Henry Peters Gray, George Inness, George Fuller and Whistler, John La Farge and Homer D. Martin, Albert P. Ryder and John S. Sargent. It is to this group

that Louis C. Tiffany belongs, and if the relationship is not always recognized the reason lies in the fact that he made so great a name in the arts and crafts that his achievements in this field have thrown his work as a painter in the shade. There was a time, however, when his paintings and water colors at the exhibitions of the National Academy, the Society of American Artists and the New York Water Color Society were recognized as the work of a colorist by those who know enough to value the rare gifts of an eye for color and a hand capable of making color sing from the canvas.

It was with this uncommon endowment, so generally misunderstood, that he turned to forms of art which demand color-feeling in an artist even more than does oil-painting; for they offer no methods of getting round the issue as oil-painting can be made to do for the near-colorist. Mosaics that admit of no shadows and confused lines, glass through which the light shines revealingly, textiles that are moved about in this or that light, these are things that test an artist on the color-side and permit of no evasion. In the queer, half-conscious art faith of the artist, such works rank far below the painted canvas; in their unwritten book of nobility the workmen in the arts and crafts are mere *bons bourgeois*, while they are the upper crust. Without reasoning on the matter, they take opinions ready-made like the generality of people and learn from their school days that the painters of easel pictures form the aristocracy of the profession. Without going farther into the matter and showing historically and sociologically how this odd situation among painters has come about, let us merely note that Tiffany was too intelligent an artist to be thus deceived and being naturally of an inventive turn of mind, proceeded to devote himself to other lines of work which called upon his talent with even greater force.

It has been told how stained glass fascinated him and how he helped to place that exquisite form of art expression again before the world with a richness and magnificence of color only to be equalled by the men of the thirteenth century, who filled the great bays of Gothic aisles

and chancels with splendor, so that America, not Europe, now makes stained glass for true connoisseurs. Out of this school of American painters in glass came, thanks to Tiffany's inventive mind, the small glass objects like the Favrile and other styles, together with a variety of objects in glass too many for anything but a catalogue. Glazes on pottery claimed much of his time during certain years; enamels on copper were brought to public notice; jewelry of an original and individual kind found and still finds a big circle of admirers. Indeed, as time went on, the number of different art-works to which he gave attention became so great that it seemed marvelous that one man, however well supported by capable assistants, could find the waking hours in which to keep track of them all. No one could have done it all except a person who could double his existence as a creative artist with the life of a business man.

A vast amount of work was turned out in the quarters of the Tiffany Glass Company at Fourth Avenue and Twenty-Fifth Street, but when he moved his art shops to Madison Avenue and Forty-Fifth Street, taking possession of the building erected for the Knickerbocker Athletic Club, the supervision of so great a business by itself made demands on the nerves which might seem enough for any man without the addition thereto of individual exertion.

Yet all this while Mr. Tiffany was so far from neglecting home life under the stress of business *plus* creative art in the various fields of his endeavor that he found time to plan and carefully carry out no less than four homes in succession. Nor were these ordinary dwellings. Each apartment was the result of intense application as to its general scheme, and every part of each room was studied for its color-scheme, the lighting by day and night, and the disposal of art objects of the greatest beauty and value. As to the two country houses as parts of the landscape, the matter has been treated in the last chapter. His delight in flowers has resulted in great attention to the growing of native and exotic plants, some for their blossoms, others for their frondage. We

may fairly ask, how could he have made the time to attend to all these things in town and out of town? It is true that he has denied himself distant travels. He has not yet visited Japan and India, though the pull in that direction must always have been very strong.

It is about half a century ago that he showed in his art the influence of the Orient, yet Turkey and Álgiers are the only parts of the East that he has studied on the spot, so far. In one sense his life may be said to have been uneventful, if we speak from the traveler's point of view, but not so if we put ourselves in the place of the artist and inventor. It can never be said of him that a rolling stone gathers no moss. When we think of the silent effect produced in a thousand families, and in more museums than could easily be named, by the inspiring art-works he has produced, we can say sincerely that he has deserved well of the republic.

THE END

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